



**REPORT OF THE TWENTIETH MEETING OF THE FISHERIES CONSULTATIVE
GROUP OF THE ASEAN-SEAFDEC STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (FCG/ASSP)**

30 November - 1 December 2017, Bangkok, Thailand

INTRODUCTION

1. The Twentieth Meeting of the Fisheries Consultative Group (FCG) of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (ASSP) or 20FCG/ASSP was organized in Bangkok, Thailand from 30 November to 1 December 2017. The 20FCG/ASSP discussed the programs and activities implemented by SEAFDEC in 2017 and those proposed for 2018 under the FCG/ASSP mechanism as endorsed by the SEAFDEC Program Committee at its Fortieth Meeting (40PCM) in November 2017, the progress of other proposals implemented under the ASSP Framework, as well as policy considerations on issues of importance to the fisheries sector of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries. The Meeting was attended by representatives from the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries and the ASEAN Secretariat, the SEAFDEC Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General and senior officials of the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments. The List of Participants appears as **Annex 1**.

2. The Meeting was co-chaired by the representative from Singapore, *Mr. Lim Huan Sein* as the current Chairperson of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGF_i) and the Secretary-General of SEAFDEC, *Dr. Kom Silapajarn*. In his capacity as the Co-chair for SEAFDEC, the SEAFDEC Secretary-General welcomed the participants and acknowledged with profound gratitude the SEAFDEC Program Committee for reviewing and scrutinizing the programs implemented by SEAFDEC in 2017 as well as the programs proposed for 2018 under the ASEAN-SEAFDEC collaborative mechanism during the Fortieth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Program Committee on 27-29 November 2017, and also thanked the SEAFDEC Marine Fisheries Research Department (MFRD) for hosting the 40PCM. His Welcome Remarks appears as **Annex 2**.

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING

3. The Co-chair for the ASEAN acknowledged the presence of the representatives from the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries as an indication of the significant cooperation between the ASEAN and SEAFDEC on sustainable fisheries and aquaculture development in the region. He recognized that the Resolution on the Future of SEAFDEC: Vision, Mission, and Strategies towards 2030 and the Strategic Plan of Action on ASEAN's Cooperation on Fisheries for 2016-2020, both signify the commitment of SEAFDEC and the ASEAN towards a sustainable future and provide the direction for the ASEAN Member States (AMSs). He highlighted that the Letter of Understanding on the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership signed ten years ago, provided a formal framework for the ASEAN and SEAFDEC to work together in maximizing the fishery potentials of the region in a sustainable manner. He commended SEAFDEC for its continued efforts in strengthening the region's expertise on combating IUU fishing but also commented that there is still a need to look towards aquaculture and other alternatives as natural fish stocks continue to decline. He therefore encouraged the Member Countries to sustain their commitment and collaboration to meet the challenges in attaining the sustainability of fish and fishery products in the region. He then thanked the SEAFDEC Secretariat for assisting MFRD in organizing the 40PCM and declared the 20 FCG/ASSP open. His Opening Remarks appears as **Annex 3**.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

4. The Agenda which appears as **Annex 4** was adopted.

III. FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS TO THE DIRECTIVES GIVEN AT THE MEETINGS OF SEAFDEC COUNCIL AND ASEAN BODIES RELATED TO FISHERIES

3.1 Follow-up Actions to the Directives Given at the Forty-ninth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council and the Nineteenth Meeting of the Fisheries Consultative Group (FCG) of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (ASSP)

5. The representative from SEAFDEC Secretariat presented the follow-up actions undertaken by SEAFDEC in response to the directives of the SEAFDEC Council during its 49th Meeting on 3-7 April 2017 and the Fisheries Consultative Group of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (FCG/ASSP) during its 19th Meeting on 1-2 December 2016, shown as **Annex 5** and **Annex 6**, respectively.

6. During the discussion in relation to the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), the representative from Indonesia reiterated that one of the recommendations of the 19th Meeting of the FCG/ASSP in 2016 was for SEAFDEC to conduct a regional review of the national laws and regulations of the AMSs to enhance the effectiveness of the implementation of PSMA considering the non-equivalence of the capacity of the respective countries. He therefore reminded SEAFDEC to follow-up on this aspect and come up with a baseline information, and subsequently to seek support from relevant agencies and organizations for the necessary capacity building for the AMSs.

7. In response to the request to review the laws and regulations with regards to PSMA, the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat informed the 20FCG/ASSP that SEAFDEC does not have the necessary expertise to review the laws, regulations and institutional responsibilities, and therefore is seeking assistance from FAO and other relevant international organizations. The 20FCG/ASSP was also informed that some Member Countries have already conducted reviews of their respective laws consistent with PSMA implementation requirements as reported during a meeting on MCS for the Gulf of Thailand Sub-region. The 20FCG/ASSP also noted the suggestion of the representative from Cambodia for SEAFDEC to facilitate an ASEAN-wide cooperation in support of the implementation of port State measures.

8. The representative from Brunei Darussalam shared the view that review of national laws and regulations is subject to the consent of national authorities of the respective countries. In this connection, SEAFDEC could focus on identifying the legislative gaps in combating IUU fishing, which the Member Countries can refer to, should they decide to implement their respective legal reviews.

9. While agreeing with the recommendation raised by the representative from Brunei Darussalam, the representative from Cambodia also suggested that SEAFDEC should not only focus on the implementation of port State measures but also to take into consideration the fishing capacity as well as the flag State responsibilities in order to combat IUU fishing in the region.

10. Regarding the preliminary surveys on anguillid eels conducted by IFRDMD and AQD, the representative from the Philippines requested that the results of the surveys should be disseminated to the AMSs whenever possible.

11. While noting the recommendations of the AMSs on the follow-up actions undertaken by SEAFDEC, the 20FCG/ASSP encouraged SEAFDEC to undertake actions that would address the concerns of the AMSs and report the results of such actions to the next meeting of the FCG/ASSP.

3.2 Follow-up Actions to the Directives Given by the ASEAN Bodies Related to Fisheries during 2017

12. The ASEAN Secretariat informed the 20FCG/ASSP on the results of the discussions of the ASEAN Bodies Related to Fisheries, particularly the 25th Meeting of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (25ASWGF_i), 17-19 May 2017 in Singapore; the Special Senior Officials Meeting of the 38th Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (SSOM 38AMAF), 14-15 August 2017 in Singapore; the Preparatory Senior Officials Meeting of the Thirty-ninth Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (PREP-SOM 39AMAF), 25-26 September 2017 in Chiang Mai, Thailand; and the 39th Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (39AMAF), 28 September 2017 in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The presentation appears as **Annex 7**.

13. In the ensuing discussion, the representative from Viet Nam requested for information on the progress of the development of the ASEAN Common Fisheries Policy (ACFP). In response, the ASEAN Secretariat explained that there was no consensus on the comments raised by the Special SOM-38th AMAF on the proposal to form an Ad-Hoc Task Force to conduct a feasibility study on the need to develop the ACFP, and that the SOM-AMAF tasked ASWGF_i to work on the issues and to revise the draft TOR of the Ad-Hoc Task Force at the 26th ASWGF_i Meeting.

14. While noting that issues on the proposed ACFP should be undertaken under the ASEAN mechanism, the 20FCG/ASSP suggested that SEAFDEC could consider supporting the technical aspects of the proposed ACFP if requested.

IV. ASEAN-SEAFDEC STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (ASSP) AND FISHERIES CONSULTATIVE GROUP (FCG) COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS FOR THE YEAR 2017-2018

4.1 Summary Report on the FCG/ASSP Collaborative Programs for the Year 2017-2018

15. The Secretary-General of SEAFDEC in his capacity as the Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Program Committee presented the progress of the collaborative programs implemented by SEAFDEC under the Fisheries Consultative Group of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (FCG/ASSP) Mechanism for 2017-2018, which were reviewed by the 40PCM convened in Bangkok, Thailand from 27 to 29 November 2017. The results of the program scrutiny and the recommendations of the 40PCM (**Annex 8**) were summarized and submitted to the 20FCG/ASSP for consideration and endorsement. After the discussion and taking into account the recommendations made by the 20FCG/ASSP, the progress and achievements of the programs implemented under the FCG/ASSP in 2017 and the programs proposed for 2018 were endorsed for submission to the higher authorities of the ASEAN and SEAFDEC for consideration and endorsement.

16. The Secretary-General of SEAFDEC also reported two projects, namely: 1) Strengthening the Effective Management Scheme with GIS and Remote Sensing Technology for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture at AMSs; and 2) SEAFDEC-EU/CITES Sharks Project Phase II, that were proposed during the 40PCM as pipeline projects. The 20FCG/ASSP agreed that once funding for these two projects could be secured, SEAFDEC should put these two projects into the FCG/ASSP mechanism and implementation of the project could then commence.

17. Regarding the project “Environment-friendly, Sustainable Utilization and Management of Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources,” the representative from Myanmar requested AQD to share the culture technology on high-value species developed under this project to the other Member Countries.

18. Moreover, the representative from the Philippines suggested that SEAFDEC should look into the sustainability of production from aging aquaculture areas that have shown environmental degradation. SEAFDEC was therefore encouraged to give focus on the restoration of the quality of the environment of these areas for both short- and long-term productivity. He added that management

strategies could be developed to ensure that the productivity of the once productive areas is restored. He also suggested that IFRDMD and TD should be involved in this project since the application of machinery in the restoration efforts could be effective in the short-term. While agreeing with the aforesaid suggestions, the Chief of AQD indicated to take this issue into consideration but would seek the cooperation of the concerned Philippine Government agencies, *e.g.* BFAR.

19. For the project “Reinforcement and Optimization of Fish Health Management and the Effective Dissemination in the Southeast Asian Region,” the representative from Myanmar sought clarification on the process involved in the development of the screening and quarantine procedures. In this regard, the representative from AQD explained that this would involve training of fish health personnel, visit of AQD staff to aquaculture facilities in the country, and conduct of on-site training.

20. In response to the suggestions made by the representative from Myanmar on the “ASEAN Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (ARASFF),” the ASEAN Secretariat informed the Meeting that ARASFF is a mechanism led by Thailand to notify and exchange information on risks to human deriving from food and feed traded in the ASEAN. He added that should an interest on ARASFF be raised, the ASEAN Secretariat could assist SEAFDEC in facilitating the possible linkages between the project and ARASFF.

21. The representative from Cambodia suggested that SEAFDEC should consider inserting a column on the status of project implementation in Appendix 1 of **Annex 8**, and that SEAFDEC should also consider identifying the projects that could be implemented in Cambodia, particularly those that need urgent action, considering that Cambodia needs to prepare the budget necessary for the implementation of such projects. He also made an observation that some of the SEAFDEC projects have been implemented for a long time already, and suggested that the progress of such projects should be summarized and concluded for better understanding of the status of the project implementation.

22. The ASEAN Secretariat informed the Meeting that the list of collaborative programs proposed by SEAFDEC for 2018 under the FCG/ASSP should be submitted to ASWGFi only for notation, unless the specific proposal would require funding under the ASEAN mechanism in which case the endorsement from ASWGFi could be requested.

V. PROGRESS OF SEAFDEC-RELATED ACTIVITIES/PROPOSALS UNDER THE ASEAN RELATED BODIES

5.1 ASEAN Ad-hoc Steering Committee on Climate Change and Food Security

23. The 20FCG/ASSP took note of ASEAN Secretariat’s presentation on the results of the 5th Meeting of the Ad-hoc Steering Committee on Climate Change and Food Security (AHSCCC-FS) held on 1-2 December 2016 in Bali, Indonesia, which appears as **Annex 9**.

24. In response to the query of the representative from Viet Nam on the working mechanism of the AHSCCC-FS particularly the participation of the ASWGFi in this forum, the ASEAN Secretariat clarified that AHSCCC-FS is a cross-sectoral mechanism on climate change and food security under the AMAF and chaired by SOM-AMAF Leaders on rotational basis. The AHSCCC-FS meetings are participated only by the Chairs of relevant working groups under the agriculture, forestry, environment, energy, and health sectors. The Ad-Hoc Steering Committee may also invite resource persons from international organizations if deemed necessary.

25. In order that the relevant fisheries-related issues could be properly raised to the AHSCCC-FS in the future, the representative from Viet Nam suggested that the issues that need consideration by the AHSCCC-FS should be raised during the ASWGFi Meeting, and conveyed to the AHSCCC-FS through the ASWGFi Chair.

5.2 ASEAN Fisheries Consultative Forum (AFCF)

26. The 20FCG/ASSP noted the presentation of the ASEAN Secretariat on the results of the 9th Meeting of the ASEAN Fisheries Consultative Forum (AFCF) held on 15-16 May 2017 in Singapore, which appears as **Annex 10**.

5.3 ASEAN Shrimp Alliance (ASA)

27. The Meeting took note of the presentation made by the representative from Thailand on the progress of the ASEAN Shrimp Alliance (ASA) which includes the outcomes from the 7th ASEAN Shrimp Alliance held on 6-7 February 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand, the progress of works in 2017, and the plan to conduct the 8th ASA Meeting in March 2018 in Thailand. The presentation appears as **Annex 11**.

28. During the discussion, the representative from Viet Nam expressed the appreciation to Thailand for the preparations of the forthcoming 8th ASA Meeting and suggested that the ASEAN standard should be made clear in the proposed Agenda on “Establishment on Recognition ASEAN Logo for Shrimp Production.” In this regard, the representative from Thailand clarified that for this purpose, the ASEAN Shrimp GAP would serve as the ASEAN standard.

29. While expressing the concern on the “Seafood Import Monitoring Program (SIMP),” the representative from Viet Nam indicated that discussions of the ASA should concentrate not only on the U.S. market but should also cover all the requirements in the whole value chain of shrimp products. She added that ASA should also establish a mechanism for quick reaction by exporting countries in responding to the technical barriers to trade imposed by importing markets. In this connection, the representative from Thailand agreed to accommodate the abovementioned suggestions for discussion at the 8th ASA Meeting.

30. Furthermore, the representative from Thailand also explained that SIMP is an emerging issue in the region which requires the importer to provide key data vulnerable to IUU fishing and/or seafood fraud. Under the SIMP, the mandatory compliance date for most priority species listed in the rule will be on 1 January 2018, and added that the rule on shrimp and abalone will take effect at a later date since more actions are needed in order to develop the corresponding national laws.

31. The representative from Cambodia also expressed the view that the 8th ASA Meeting should ideally be held back-to-back with the aquaculture related meetings, and that the agenda for the ASA Meeting should be made concrete in order to come up with tangible results from the Meeting.

32. On the progress of Thailand’s proposal on “Aquatic Emergency Preparedness and Response Systems for Effective Management of Transboundary Disease Outbreaks in Southeast Asia,” the ASEAN Secretariat informed the Meeting that the proposal was already approved by SOM-AMAF and was submitted to the Committee of Permanent Representative of ASEAN for consideration and endorsement to the Mission of Japan to the ASEAN, for funding from the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF).

33. Regarding the proposed rotational hosting of the ASA meetings and although ASA is a country-led initiative with Thailand as the Chair, the ASEAN Secretariat expressed the view that hosting of the ASA on rotational basis could be possible. However, this could be confirmed only upon conducting a review of the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedures of the ASA.

VI. POLICY CONSIDERATION ON INTERNATIONAL FISHERIES-RELATED ISSUES

6.1 CITES Issues

34. The representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat presented the updated information on the CITES related issues including the results of the 29th Meeting of the Animals Committee, particularly on commercially exploited aquatic species (**Annex 12**).

35. During the discussion, the Chief of IFRDMD informed the 20FCG/ASSP that IFRDMD would convene a workshop in collaboration with FAO to discuss the preparation of proposals for the upcoming CITES-CoP18. The workshop is tentatively scheduled in April 2018 in Indonesia using a grant supported by the FAO.

36. The representative from Cambodia also suggested that the ASEAN Secretariat should be represented during the said meeting to be organized by IFRDMD and that the proposal to down-list crocodiles in Southeast Asia from Appendix I of the CITES to Appendix II which was submitted in the previous CITES-CoP16 and CITES-CoP17, should be discussed again. He also requested that the presence of high level authorities in such meeting would be encouraged to empower the negotiations during the CITES-CoP Meetings.

37. In response to the query of the representative from Viet Nam on whether there is any existing framework in SEAFDEC under the FCG mechanism, to develop the regional database on the stocks of sharks, the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat explained that SEAFDEC has undertaken sharks data collection supported by the Japanese Trust Fund and EU-CITES Fund, which would come up with the database for sharks and rays in the Southeast Asian region. Furthermore, SEAFDEC has been compiling data and information for the Fishery Statistical Bulletin of Southeast Asia that could accommodate statistics on sharks and rays at species level, and such compiled data is based on the information officially submitted by the Southeast Asian countries to SEAFDEC.

38. In addition, the 20FCG/ASSP was informed that TD would work closely with MFRDMD for the development of such database for sharks and rays. Moreover, the application of the ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme (ACDS) could be an alternative option to generate the necessary data, *e.g.* sharks landing data together with the points of capture, and improve the national fisheries statistics including records on sharks and rays data of the region in the future.

39. The Secretary-General of SEAFDEC expressed the concern on the need to enhance the understanding among the AMSs on the development of CITES common positions on aquatic species prior to the CITES CoP forum, considering that the representatives from the AMSs attending such fora could come from different sectors and agencies, *i.e.* environment, conservation, and fisheries (with the least representation). This would ensure that at the next CITES-CoP18 scheduled in Sri Lanka in 2019, the votes for the common position would be unified and empowered.

40. While thanking the representative from Cambodia for the suggestions, the Deputy Secretary-General of SEAFDEC clarified that SEAFDEC would support the common positions of the AMSs on anguillid eels as well as on sharks and rays based on the outputs of the JAIF and JTF projects. He also suggested that considerations for the formulation of management frameworks for the other commercially-exploited aquatic species towards developing the agreed common positions, among the AMSs should be strongly taken into account.

41. The Meeting noted the results of the discussion of the 25th ASWGFi Meeting which included a request for the ASEAN Working Group (AWG) on CITES and Wildlife Enforcement through the ASEAN Secretariat, to consider extending the invitation to ASWGFi Focal Points during the meetings of AWG-CITES and Wildlife Enforcement, and for the AMSs to strengthen their inter-agency collaboration between national fisheries agencies and CITES authorities.

6.2 Combating IUU Fishing

6.2.1 Progress on the Implementation of the ASEAN Guidelines for Preventing the Entry of Fish and Fishery Products from IUU Fishing Activities into the Supply Chain

42. The Meeting noted the progress made by MFRDMD on the promotion of the ASEAN Guidelines for Preventing the Entry of Fish and Fishery Products from IUU Fishing Activities into the Supply Chain (**Annex 13**).

43. In the discussion, the representative from Viet Nam requested an explanation on the follow-up actions and implementation of the Guidelines as a national policy. In this regard, the representative from MFRDMD clarified that the translation of the Guidelines to national languages of the AMSs would be undertaken and that SEAFDEC would provide funds for this purpose. He added that a self-assessment on the status of the implementation of the Guidelines was carried out during the Second Regional Technical Consultation on the Promotion of the ASEAN Guidelines for Preventing the Entry of Fish and Fishery Products from IUU Fishing Activities into the Supply Chain organized by MFRDMD on 21-23 November 2017 in Malaysia. He added that the status of implementation of the Guidelines is about 65-90%, and when the implementation achieves 100%, then IUU fishing in the region would be significantly reduced.

44. The representative from Viet Nam expressed the concern on the implementation of the Guidelines considering the different stakeholders that take part in the value chain. Although the Guidelines in local languages would be useful if introduced to the local enterprises, she suggested that a system should be developed for the promotion of the Guidelines to the different segments of the value chain. In this connection, the representative from MFRDMD explained that such concern could be addressed when MFRDMD carries out the planned country visits to the AMSs in 2018 to promote the implementation of the Guidelines.

6.2.2 Progress on the Regional Fishing Vessels Record for Vessels 24 m in Length and Over

45. The Meeting took note of the progress of the Regional Fishing Vessels Record (RFVR) 24 Meters in Length and Over (**Annex 14**) including the strategies and way forward for the improvement, promotion, and utilization of the RFVR Database for vessels 24 meters in length and over as reported by the representative from TD.

46. With regard to the request for nomination of the National Focal Points for the RFVR, the representative from Myanmar informed the Meeting that TD would be informed of the official nomination of the country's national focal point as soon as possible. The representative from the Philippines also indicated that the Philippines is in the process of updating the necessary data for the RFVR and will submit the said updated data to TD in due course.

6.2.3 Progress on ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme

47. The Meeting noted the presentation made by the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat on the progress of improving the traceability of marine capture fishery products through the promotion of the application of the ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme (ACDS) in the AMSs, as well as on the key data elements for developing the electronic form of the ACDS or eACDS (**Annex 15**).

48. During the discussion, the representative from the Philippines inquired whether the eACDS developed by SEAFDEC could be harmonized with the eCDT developed by USAID/Oceans which has already been adopted in the Philippines. In this connection, the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat explained that during the initial phase, SEAFDEC intended to harmonize the eACDS and eCDT. However, since the eCDT was not developed into a system that could be generally utilized, it is up for the Member Countries to develop their own CDT using the document that was prepared and distributed by the USAID/Oceans.

49. The representative from Thailand observed that some countries have already established their respective catch documentation schemes (CDS) but these focus only on single species. In this

connection, the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat explained that the eACDS has been developed for marine capture fisheries and could cover multi-species aligned with the type of fishing gear focusing on major species caught from fishing operations.

6.2.4 Progress on Regional Cooperation for Implementation of the Port State Measures

50. The 20FCG/ASSP noted the presentation made by representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat on the progress of the regional cooperation for the implementation of the Port State Measures (**Annex 16**).

51. During the discussion, the representative from Viet Nam suggested that SEAFDEC should consider the possibility of establishing the network among the AMSs and strengthening the regional cooperation for sharing of relevant information, *e.g.* list of carrier vessels. While recognizing the existence of RPOA-IUU which is a voluntary regional mechanism, she also shared the view that there is no formal channel for the regional cooperation for the port State measures. In this regard, SEAFDEC could consider assisting the AMSs in the establishment of the network under the ASEAN mechanism.

6.2.5 Progress on Implementation of the Regional Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity

52. The Meeting took note of the progress made by SEAFDEC in the Implementation of the Regional Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity (RPOA-Capacity), including the results of the Stock and Risk Assessments of Neritic Tunas in Southeast Asia that came up with recommendations on the appropriate Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) level for longtail tuna and kawakawa in the Indian Ocean, South China Sea and Pacific Ocean, as well as the suggestions on the appropriate Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for the management of these species, as presented by the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat. The presentation appears as **Annex 17**.

53. While noting the results from the stock assessment of the two neritic tuna species, the representative from Indonesia expressed the view that management of tunas are undertaken under the purview of the relevant RFMOs, *i.e.* the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC); and suggested that SEAFDEC should not duplicate their efforts by developing management measures for tuna species. Nevertheless, research on stock assessment of the shared stocks within the EEZs of Southeast Asian countries could still be undertaken by SEAFDEC to support the Member Countries in the management of their fisheries resources.

54. The representative from Myanmar indicated that since Myanmar is in the process of developing its National Plan of Action (NPOA) for the Management of Fishing Capacity, he urged the other AMSs to also actively implement actions towards the management of fishing capacity.

6.3 Promotion on Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture in ASEAN Region

6.3.1 Regional Plan of Action for Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tunas in the ASEAN Region

55. The Meeting took note of the progress made by SEAFDEC in the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action for Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tunas in the ASEAN Region (**Annex 18**) which was presented by the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat.

56. In the discussion, the representative from Indonesia reiterated his comment that management of tunas should be undertaken under the purview of the relevant RFMOs and that SEAFDEC should not duplicate their efforts by developing management measures for tuna species.

57. While seeking clarification on the determination of the MSY and TAC, the representative from the Philippines also inquired whether high fecundity and recruitment could compensate the fishing mortality of the species. In response, the Chief of MFRDMD clarified that MSY calculation always consider the recruitment rate and fecundity level of particular species, and emphasized that the TAC level should always be lower than the MSY otherwise over-exploitation could occur.

58. On the proposed establishment of the Scientific Working Group on Neritic Tunas as a new subsidiary body under ASWGFi, the ASEAN Secretariat viewed that the establishment of this new working group would face approval difficulties considering that the ASEAN has recently completed the streamlining process of all working groups under SOM-AMAF/AMAF. Furthermore, there is already an existing ASEAN Tuna Working Group under the ASEAN Joint Committee on Agricultural and Forest Product Promotion Scheme, which is currently working on the development of ASEAN Tuna Eco-labelling Scheme.

59. The representative from Indonesia also shared the view that if the proposed the establishment of the Scientific Working Group on Neritic Tunas is only intended to connect the scientific research results to the ASWGFi, then the other mechanism that is already in place could serve the purpose of appropriately submitting such research results to the ASWGFi for consideration.

6.3.2 Progress on Conservation and Management of Catadromous Eel Resources and Promotion of Sustainable Aquaculture in the Southeast Asia

60. The 20FCG/ASSP noted the progress on the Conservation and Management of Catadromous Eel Resources and Promotion of Sustainable Aquaculture in the Southeast Asia (**Annex 19**), which was presented by the representative from IFRDMD.

6.3.3 Progress on the Proposed Establishment of an Aquatic Emergency Preparedness and Response System

61. The 20FCG/ASSP took note of the progress made by SEAFDEC on the Proposed Establishment of an Aquatic Emergency Preparedness and Response System for Effective Management of Transboundary Disease Outbreaks in Southeast Asia (**Annex 20**) which was presented by the Chief of AQD.

62. The 20FCG/ASSP also noted the proposal to conduct an “ASEAN Regional Technical Consultation on Aquatic Emergency Preparedness and Response System for Effective Management of Transboundary Disease Outbreaks in Southeast Asia” on 28-30 June 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand, which is currently awaiting approval for funding support from the JAIF.

6.3.4 Updates on the Proposed Establishment of the Regional Database of Alternative Feed Ingredients in Aquaculture

63. The Meeting noted the presentation made by Chief of AQD on the progress made in establishing the Regional Database of Alternative Feed Ingredients in Aquaculture (**Annex 21**), and requested the countries that have not yet nominated their focal points to submit to AQD the names of their respective focal points.

6.3.5 Regional Approaches for the Implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication

64. The Meeting took note of the presentation made by the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat on the progress of the Regional Approaches for the Implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication, which included a Policy Brief on applying human rights-based and gender

equality approaches to small-scale fisheries (SSF) in Southeast Asia. The presentation appears as **Annex 22**.

65. The 20FCG/ASSP was also informed that the aforementioned Policy Brief constitutes a condensed version of the outcomes of the Experts Workshop which discussed the applicability, relevance and importance of taking into consideration the human rights-based and gender equality approaches in promoting the sustainable development of small-scale fisheries.

66. In response to the query of the representative from Singapore on the features of the Policy Brief, the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat explained that the Policy Brief serves only as a guide for elaborating the human rights-based and gender equality approaches in the SSF Guidelines. With regards to the meaning of “power imbalances” among various value-chain actors as a major output of the Experts Meeting, the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat explained that “power imbalances” could refer to the economic unbalances, and imbalances between rural and urban people, between the poor and rich, especially with respect to their difficulties in accessing the fishery resources.

6.4 Others/Emerging Issues

6.4.1 Summary Results of the Ocean Conference and SEAFDEC’s Involvement in the UN SDGs

67. The 20FCG/ASSP took note of the summary report of the Ocean Conference and the involvement of SEAFDEC in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which was presented by the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat. Although this issue is not categorized under the program of FCG/ASSP mechanism, the 20FCG/ASSP was informed that the Ocean Conference was recognized as an important forum as the discussions were relevant to the programs of SEAFDEC particularly those related to the issues under the SDG-14, *e.g.* combating IUU fishing and environment related issues.

VII. Other Matters

7.1 Management Strategies and Measures for Purse Seine Fishery in the South China Sea

68. The Chief of MFRDMD informed the 20FCG/ASSP of the Management Strategies and Measures for Purse Seine Fishery in the South China Sea (**Annex 23**) which focuses on commercially important small pelagic species commonly caught by purse seine and on the need to develop the management of purse seine fisheries.

69. While agreeing to the difficulties faced by many countries in collecting the necessary information specifically on purse seine fisheries, the representative from Indonesia clarified that the countries in South China Sea are not only the Southeast Asian countries but also include China and Chinese Taipei that also share large amounts of the fish catch. In this connection, he suggested that MFRDMD could obtain secondary data from various sources, *e.g.* technical publications, necessary for the development of the proposed management measures for the South China Sea.

70. The Chief of MFRDMD also requested the project participating countries to cooperate with the project by providing data and information on purse seine fisheries in order to come up with a regional synthesis of purse seine fisheries in the South China Sea.

VIII. ADOPTION OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORT OF THE MEETING

71. The report of the 20FCG/ASSP was adopted on 1 December 2017.

72. The report of the 20FCG/ASSP will be submitted to the ASWGFi and SEAFDEC Council for consideration and appropriate action.

IX. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

73. The Co-chair for the ASEAN acknowledged the active participation of all the participants who shared valuable comments during the Meeting. The Secretary-General of SEAFDEC as the Co-Chair for SEAFDEC, in his Closing Remarks, thanked the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries and their respective delegations for their constructive comments and suggestions as well as policy recommendations during the 20FCG/ASSP. He also expressed his appreciation to the SEAFDEC Departments for their cooperation and support, and the Secretariat of the Meeting for the excellent arrangements, and then declared the 20FCG/ASSP closed. His Closing Remarks appears as **Annex 24**.