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## REPORT OF THE FORTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT CENTER

**Langkawi, Malaysia  
5-7 November 2018**

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### I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Forty-first Meeting of the Program Committee (41PCM) of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) was held in Langkawi, Malaysia from 5 to 7 November 2018 and hosted by the Marine Fishery Resources Development and Management Department (MFRDMD).

2. The 41PCM was attended by the SEAFDEC Program Committee Members for Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam together with their respective delegations. Representatives from the collaborating partners of SEAFDEC namely: the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO); Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF); Gifu Prefectural Inland Fisheries Training Center in Japan; Sweden Embassy in Bangkok; and the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management (SwAM); observers from the National Fisheries Authority of Papua New Guinea and the USAID Oceans; as well as the SEAFDEC Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General, and Department Chiefs as *ex-officio* members of the SEAFDEC Program Committee together with officers from the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments, also attended the Meeting. The list of participants appears as **Annex 1**.

### II. OPENING OF THE MEETING

3. The Director General of the Department of Fisheries Malaysia and SEAFDEC Council Director for Malaysia, *Dato' Haji Munir bin Haji Mohd Nawawi* expressed his pleasure to welcome the SEAFDEC Program Committee Members and their delegates as well as other guests to Langkawi, Malaysia. He congratulated SEAFDEC for its successes in the implementation of programs, projects, and activities based on the Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region Towards 2020. While emphasizing on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), he reiterated that with the collaboration of its partner organizations, SEAFDEC should continue to play the role as cornerstone in assisting the Member Countries to implement SDG14: Conserve and Sustainably Use of Oceans, Seas and Marine Resources for Sustainable Development. In addition, he encouraged SEAFDEC to intensify its efforts in facilitating the conduct of capacity building activities, especially in areas of critical importance to the Southeast Asian region, and more particularly on fish stock assessment, post-harvest loss and waste assessment. His Welcome Remarks appears as **Annex 2**

4. The Secretary-General of SEAFDEC, *Dr. Kom Silapajarn* in his capacity as Chairperson of the Program Committee, welcomed the participants and observers to the Meeting, and expressed the condolences of SEAFDEC to the people of Indonesia who have been affected by the destruction brought about by the *tsunami* in Sulawesi in September 2018. He continued by explaining that starting with this Forty-first Meeting of the SEAFDEC Program Committee, the discussion would be guided by the SEAFDEC Strategies Towards 2030 prescribed in the Resolution on the Future of SEAFDEC (RES-2017) adopted during the Special SEAFDEC Council Meeting in 2017. He added that based on the directive of the SEAFDEC Council during its Fiftieth Meeting in March 2018, the projects implemented by SEAFDEC under the Fisheries Consultative Group on ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (FCG/ASSP) Mechanism have been harmonized and aligned under the said SEAFDEC Strategies. He also specified that as before, the review of implementation of these Programs would start with the programs under the FCG/ASSP Mechanism followed by the Departmental Programs and other programs, and pipeline programs, and reiterated that the outputs of the Meeting together with the recommendations would be submitted to the forthcoming meeting of the SEAFDEC Council for consideration and approval as well as

to the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries or ASWGFi through the Twenty-first Meeting of the FCG/ASSP to be held back-to-back with this Program Committee Meeting. After encouraging the Program Committee to closely examine the programs of activities implemented in 2018, as well as those proposed for 2019 to ensure that these address the concerns and requirements of the region, he declared the Program Committee Meeting open. His Opening Remarks appears as **Annex 3**.

5. Held in conjunction with the Opening Ceremony of the 41PCM was the launching of the book “Marine Fishes and Crustacean of the Southeast Asian Region” recently published by MFRDMD to serve as comprehensive and user-friendly reference in identifying the morphological characteristics of marine fishes and crustaceans found in the Southeast Asian region. Copies of the book were distributed to the participants in the 41PCM.

### **III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS OF THE MEETING**

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

### **IV. REVIEW OF SEAFDEC PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION FOR THE YEAR 2018 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMS FOR THE YEAR 2019**

7. The Program Committee took note of the twenty-three projects under the FCG/ASSP Mechanism which have been classified under the six (6) SEAFDEC Strategies, and two Special Projects. The Program Committee then reviewed the progress and achievements of the projects in 2018 and the programs of activity for 2019, as reported by the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments. The results of the review process as well as the recommendations of the Program Committee will be submitted for endorsement to the higher authorities of the ASEAN and SEAFDEC.

#### **4.1 Programs under the FCG/ASSP Mechanism**

8. The Program Committee noted the progress and achievements of the programs implemented by the SEAFDEC Secretariat and the Departments in 2018 as well as the activities proposed for 2019 under the FCG/ASSP Mechanism (**Annex 5**). The Program Committee provided recommendations for the improvement of the programs’ projects and activities, as follows:

#### **4.1.1 Strategy I: Securing the sustainability of fisheries to contribute to food security, poverty alleviation and livelihood of people in the region**

##### **(1) Human Resource Development for Sustainable Fisheries**

9. While commending TD for implementing the project Human Resource Development for Sustainable Fisheries, the Program Committee Member for Indonesia reiterated the recommendation made during the Fortieth Meeting of the Program Committee in 2017 on the need to develop the key performance indicators (KPIs) of each project to facilitate the monitoring and review of the progress of implementation. In response, the Secretary-General of SEAFDEC explained that the KPIs of each project would be developed for the new SEAFDEC projects starting with the Japanese Trust Fund 7 (JTF7), and that this particular project is already in its final stage of implementation until 2019.

10. The Program Committee Member for Thailand also noted the successful implementation of this project, and requested TD to consider in the future, the possibility of supporting the introduction of Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) concept in three sites in Thailand; two for inland and one for coastal areas.

11. The Program Committee Member for Myanmar expressed the appreciation to TD and the Japanese Trust Fund (JTF) for extending the implementation of the project activities in Myanmar. While expressing the view that the promotion of EAFM has close linkage with some other projects in Myanmar, *e.g.* those on climate change adaptation supported by FAO, he requested TD to consider supporting a similar initiative at a new pilot site in Kaw Thaug, Myanmar.

12. The Program Committee Member for Lao PDR commended TD for the implementation of this project as it has enhanced the capacity of local officers and the communities in Lao PDR on the EAFM concept. As for the proposed activities in 2019, he expressed the commitment of Lao PDR to continue its close collaboration and coordination with TD.

13. While appreciating TD for implementing the activities in Cambodia, the Program Committee Member for Cambodia requested TD to consider extending the future activities in Tonle Sap Lake of Cambodia.

14. The Program Committee Member for the Philippines extolled SEAFDEC for the initiatives undertaken under this project as these had supported the mainstreaming of the EAFM concept in the country's fisheries plans and programs. While considering that several pilot sites are already applying the EAFM concept, he suggested that sharing of lessons learnt from the different pilot sites should be encouraged. Moreover, he also supported the comment made by Program Committee Member for Indonesia that KPIs for each project should be developed, especially for this project, to facilitate the review of the progress of implementation in the future.

15. To facilitate the sharing of relevant lessons gained from the pilot sites, the JTF Manager explained that TD would organize a workshop in October 2019 which is meant to serve as platform for the presentation of outputs from the implementation of EAFM concept in different project sites as well as similar initiatives undertaken with collaborating partners, *e.g.* NOAA, USAID. He expressed the hope that countries not currently serving as pilot sites could gain lessons from the experiences shared, and that similar initiatives could be considered under the JTF programs in the future.

16. The representative from the BOBP-IGO expressed the view that although the EAFM is very good concept, its implementation would be difficult to undertake when a good governance system is not in place in the receiving countries. In this regard, he suggested that the EAFM concept should be mainstreamed into the respective national agenda of the ASEAN Member States (AMSs).

17. The representative from CTI-CFF shared the view that EAFM is also one of the fisheries management strategies adopted by the CTI-CFF. In this regard, he looked forward to strengthening the collaboration between CTI-CFF and SEAFDEC to enhance the implementation of capacity building activities on this concept.

## **(2) Optimizing Energy Use/Improving Safety Onboard in Fishing Activities**

18. While expressing the appreciation to TD for conducting several training courses under this project, the Program Committee Member for Viet Nam reiterated that although Viet Nam had already scheduled to conduct a pilot demonstration for improving fish handling onboard tuna purse seiners in 2018, and that the fisher-participants for such pilot demonstration had been selected, the activity had to be postponed due to some technical constraints. In this regard, she requested TD to conduct such pilot demonstration activity in 2019 in Bin Dinh Province, Viet Nam.

19. Although the Program Committee Member for Thailand expressed the willingness of Thailand to cooperate with TD in the implementation of this project, she raised some concerns about the design of the new trawler, the proportion of crew members onboard that would be reduced, and the cost of the fishing vessel modification. In response, it was clarified that approximately eight crew members could be reduced and that the new design is not intended for vessel modification, but for the construction of a new vessel. At this stage therefore, the cost of constructing a new vessel could not be estimated as this is subject to several factors and specifications.

20. The Program Committee Member for the Philippines commended TD for the implementation of this project, and sought clarification as to whether SEAFDEC has other aspects of work related to the improvement of technologies that would facilitate compliance with the requirements for exportation of fishery products to the US. In response, it was explained that TD is also undertaking activities on the development of fishing technologies that could address such concern, *e.g.* improving of the design of new otter-board fishing vessel to reduce energy consumption.

21. The Program Committee Member for Indonesia emphasized on the need to investigate the significant outcomes of the project implementation using measurable indicators to be able to compare the situation before and after the project implementation.

22. The representative from BOBP-IGO supported the suggestions that SEAFDEC should continue its activities that emphasize on promoting energy efficiency of fishing vessels.

**(3) Promotion of Sustainable Fishery Resources Enhancement Measures in Critical Habitats/Fishing Grounds in Southeast Asia**

23. The Chief of AQD commended TD for pursuing this project and shared the view that in enhancing the fishery resources, there should be a balance between capture fisheries and resource conservation. In this connection, he suggested that aquaculture could be engaged to enhance the production of the species for conservation, such as in producing multi-species seeds for stock enhancement in natural habitats.

24. While emphasizing the importance of Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) and Fish Enhancing Devices (FEDs) in enhancing fish biomass, the Chief of MFRDMD suggested that TD should consider incorporating in the project the development of effective FADs and FEDs, as well as formulating standard procedures for assessing the abundance of the resources prior to and after the deployment of FADs and FEDs.

25. In response to the comment of AQD and MFRDMD, the JTF Manager informed the Program Committee that the JTF would continue the activities under this project in collaboration with relevant SEAFDEC Departments including AQD, and that in 2019 the JTF is planning to undertake a biological evaluation on the effectiveness of the resource enhancement measures, and to come up with the standard procedures as suggested by MFRDMD.

26. The Program Committee Member for Thailand shared the experience of Thailand in the installation of FEDs using used tires since such materials release toxic substance to the environment, and that there are other aspects that should also be considered, *e.g.* the need for management and maintenance of FEDs. She suggested that other biodegradable plastics as alternative materials for FEDs could be used instead. In this connection, the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat also expressed the concern that the use of biodegradable materials such as plastics could also pose risks as these could comprise the source of microplastics in the oceans.

27. While acknowledging the benefits of the current activity on crab bank in Kep Province, the Program Committee Member for Cambodia proposed the possibility of extending the activities to other sites in Cambodia, *i.e.* Kampot Province, provided that funds are available. Otherwise, SEAFDEC could consider providing Cambodia with the awareness raising materials to be disseminated in the landing sites of the country's four coastal provinces.

28. While expressing the interest of Malaysia on hilsa species, the Program Committee Member for Malaysia inquired about the planned workshop/expert consultation on hilsa resources to be conducted for Myanmar and Thailand. He therefore proposed that Malaysia could also be invited to take part in such workshop as observer.

29. The Program Committee Member for Indonesia requested SEAFDEC to consider conducting a workshop to introduce FEDs in Indonesia in 2019 as part of this project's activities.

30. The Program Committee Member for the Philippines suggested that the project should come up with a basic model on sustainable resource enhancement that would also include aquaculture to guide the communities in making their own fisheries management programs.

**(4) Enhancement of the Sustainability of Catadromous Eel Resources in Southeast Asia**

31. The Chief of IFRDMD informed the Program Committee that during the implementation of this project, the “Workshop on Regional Awareness Raising in Asia on Prospective Species Proposals to CITES CoP18 and Preparation of Fisheries Related Information to Support Review of Species Proposals against CITES Listing Criteria” was organized by IFRDMD on 25-28 October 2018 in Palembang, Indonesia with support from FAO. The Workshop had enhanced the understanding of the countries on the roles of the FAO Expert Advisory Panel in the assessment of proposals to amend the CITES Appendices, and discussed the effective measures for monitoring the stocks of eels as well as sharing of lessons learned with regards to eel species from other regions.

32. In response to the query of the representative from BOBP-IGO about the current status of eel stock assessment, the representative from IFRDMD stated that the project has collected information on the present situation of tropical eel fisheries and formulated a system for data collection. However, some difficulties were encountered in carrying out the stock assessment due to data limitations, particularly considering that different countries in the region are catching the different stages of eels.

33. The Program Committee Member for Indonesia informed the Program Committee that exploitation of eels in Indonesia has become higher. He recommended that there is a need to develop guidelines to raise the awareness of local people about the importance of glass eels and that biological studies should be conducted for the conservation of the eel resources.

34. The representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat added that since stock assessment would require time series data, further discussion would be necessary to consider the possibility of adopting other appropriate stock assessment models where data although very limited, could be used, *i.e.* making use of data compiled only during the past few years.

#### **(5) Promotion of Responsible Utilization of Inland Fisheries in Southeast Asia**

35. The Program Committee took note of the plan of IFRDMD to publish under this project the book “Features of Inland Fisheries in Southeast Asia” in 2019, and the declaration that IFRDMD would continue to exert efforts to link this project with other relevant programs of IFRDMD considering that promotion of inland capture fisheries is the core work of IFRDMD. To further its initiatives on inland capture fisheries, IFRDMD also informed the Program Committee that a project proposal on the development of GIS mapping application is being prepared to support inland fishery resources management.

36. The Program Committee Member for Thailand expressed the appreciation to IFRDMD for its assistance in promoting increased awareness on the management of inland capture fisheries which is an important sub-sector for the Southeast Asian region. She also conveyed the support of Thailand to this project, particularly in making use of the fisheries data collected from the field to support management, and looked forward to seeing the results of this project and participating in the implementation of the project.

#### **(6) Enhancing Coastal Community Resilience for Sustainable Livelihood and Coastal Resources Management**

37. While informing the Program Committee that this project which was supported by IDB would be completed before the end of 2018, MFRDMD expressed the appreciation to the Governments of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, and Malaysia for the cooperation extended to the project that allows the project to come up with successful results. The Program Committee was also informed that MFRDMD intends to continue this similar initiative in other Member Countries, *e.g.* Cambodia, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam with possible funding support from Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF).

38. The Program Committee for the Philippines commended MFRDMD for the tangible and quantifiable results from this project, which correspond to its output objectives.

#### **(7) Promotion of Countermeasures to Reduce IUU Fishing Activities**

39. While commending SEAFDEC for sustaining the implementation of this project and expressing the view that development of regional tools to combat IUU fishing is necessary, the Program Committee Member for Indonesia supported the extension of the project after its completion in 2019. He also proposed that the future activities on combating IUU fishing for consideration by SEAFDEC, could include: 1) capacity building on fisheries surveillance to combat IUU fishing; and 2) regional capacity building on investigation and inspection techniques, and fisheries law enforcement to combat IUU fishing.

40. The Program Committee Member for Viet Nam concurred with the view of the Program Committee Member for Indonesia that regional tools are necessary to combat IUU fishing, and suggested that in addition to the extension of the implementation of the project, the project scale and contents should also be expanded. Nevertheless, on the possibility of expanding the RFVR to also cover vessels less than 24 meters in length, she expressed the view that the consensus among the Member Countries should be sought on the size/scale of vessels to be included. She added that the Regional Technical Consultation (RTC) on International Fisheries-related Issues convened in Bangkok, Thailand in June 2018 discussed this matter and viewed that the RFVR should be linked with and serve as inputs to the FAO Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels (Global Record). With regards to the PSMA which has already been ratified by some Member Countries, she expressed the view that although training on vessel inspection is important, establishment of a network for sharing information/common measures on the implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) among the countries in the region is also necessary. She therefore proposed that TD should consider establishing in the future, a mechanism to facilitate communication and exchange of information on the status of implementation of the PSMA among the AMSs.

41. The Program Committee for Thailand expressed the concern on the different protocols for vessel inspection at sea applied by different RFMOs, and requested SEAFDEC to consider the possibility of organizing a consultation among experts in the region to develop a harmonized protocol for vessel inspection at sea especially in areas beyond the national jurisdictions.

42. In response to the request made by the Program Committee Member for Thailand, the Program Committee Member for Japan informed the Meeting that the United Nations Fish Stock Agreement provides the general frameworks for vessel inspection at sea, and for each RFMO to conduct their own inspection procedures. He also suggested that the SEAFDEC Secretariat could consider contacting the concerned RFMOs to obtain information on their respective procedures. He emphasized that although monitoring of fishing activities in the high seas is important, monitoring of catch from EEZs should be also emphasized as the majority of the catch is derived from the EEZs.

43. The Program Committee Member for Japan also stated that FAO has already developed the Global Record which is now available at FAO's website. Furthermore, as the PSMA includes provisions for contracting Parties to share information on IUU fishing activities, FAO would also develop the IUU fishing vessel list under the Global Record. He therefore suggested that SEAFDEC Secretariat should consider communicating with FAO to request for the updated information on the Global Record.

44. The Program Committee Member for Malaysia expressed his concern on the plan of TD to expand the RFVR to also cover vessels less than 24 meters in length given the current challenges in updating the data. In the mean time therefore, TD should focus on vessels 24 meters in length and over. In addition, he suggested that TD should conduct training on vessel inspection but considering budget limitations, such training could be in the form of Training of Trainers (TOT). Furthermore, in the light of combating IUU fishing, he suggested that TD should consider to include in its future programs, the training of observers onboard.

45. With regards to the future plan on the RFVR, the JTF Manager informed the Meeting that SEAFDEC is planning to organize the Regional Meeting on the Regional Fishing Vessel Record (RFVR) for 24 meters in length and over as a Management Tool Toward Combating IUU Fishing in ASEAN in December 2018. It is expected that issues on the development of the record for vessels below 24 meters in length and the actions to be taken in 2019 would be discussed during such regional meeting.

**(8) Establishment and Operation of a Regional System of Fisheries *Refugia* in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand**

46. The Program Committee Member for Thailand congratulated TD for pursuing this project and provided an update on the project implementation in Thailand, the project sites of which have already been identified, *i.e.* in Trat Province focusing on Indo-Pacific mackerels; and in Ao Ban Don, Samui, Surat Thani Province for blue swimming crab. She added that the activities under this project have been implemented according to the timeline in the workplan.

**(9) Offshore Fisheries Resources Exploration in Southeast Asia**

47. While commending TD for carrying out activities on the stock assessment of migratory species under this project, the representative from the BOBP-IGO suggested that TD could consider consulting with relevant RFMOs to ensure that the said activities complement with those of the concerned RFMOs. He also shared the experience of the BOBP-IGO on stock assessment of yellowfin tuna in the Indian Ocean, as well as the concern that when a country wants to expand the fishing area, the relevant RFMOs would still regulate the activities in such fishing area.

48. The Program Committee Member for Thailand requested TD to consider involving Thailand in the activity on tuna stock assessment in Sulu-Sulawesi Sea, and to expand its training course to include growth analysis based on otolith samples.

49. The representative from SEAFDEC Secretariat reiterated that SEAFDEC is avoiding the duplication of works with any RFMOs, especially with the IOTC and WCPFC. In this connection, when there is technical collaboration between SEAFDEC and particular RFMOs, SEAFDEC would check with such concerned RFMOs on their activities related to tuna stock assessment to ensure that the SEAFDEC initiatives would support rather than duplicate the work of such RFMO.

50. The Program Committee Member for the Philippines suggested that reporting of this project at future Program Committee Meetings should also include brief results from the activity as this would be useful in the discussion of the future workplan. He suggested that SEAFDEC should also consider continuing the stock assessment of tuna in Sulu-Sulawesi Sea, the results of which could be conveyed to WCPFC for reference.

51. The Program Committee Member for Cambodia expressed the appreciation to SEAFDEC for conducting fishery resources survey in Cambodia using the M.V. SEAFDEC 2, and requested SEAFDEC to assist in strengthening the capacity of fishery officers in analyzing the data and finalizing the results of the survey.

52. The representative from CTI-CFF informed the Meeting that Sulu-Sulawesi Sea is one of the priority seascapes of CTI-CFF, and that CTI-CFF has recently completed the project under the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) in Sulu-Sulawesi Sea with activities that are in synergy with those undertaken by SEAFDEC. He therefore suggested that results of the works undertaken by SEAFDEC and CTI-CFF in this particular area should be exchanged and disseminated.

53. The Program Committee Member for Thailand shared the experience of Thailand regarding the FAO survey of the Andaman Sea using the R.V. Fridtjof Nansen, which was participated also other countries, such as Myanmar, Sri Lanka, India, and Bangladesh. In this connection, the SEAFDEC Secretary-General informed the Program Committee that other countries in the region could also request for the use of the R.V. Fridtjof Nansen in conducting marine research surveys in their respective waters.

54. The Chief of MFRDMD proposed that this project could also include modernization of fishing vessels for the sustainability of the fishery resources.

**(10) Enhancing the Compilation and Utilization of Fishery Statistics and Information for Sustainable Development and Management of Fisheries in the Southeast Asian Region**

55. The Program Committee noted the progress of the project activities to improve data collection on sharks and rays in the region which had been undertaken as collaborative efforts between TD and MFRDMD, and was also informed that the data collected under this project is from the landings only.

56. While expressing the appreciation to TD for its plan to conduct the “Regional Workshop on Improvement of Fisheries Information Collection in Small-scale Coastal and Inland Fisheries in the Southeast Asian Region” in 2019, the Program Committee Member for Myanmar sought clarification on how the country participants would be able to cover the subjects on coastal and inland small-scale fisheries data collection at the same time. In response, the representative from TD clarified that the collection of fisheries data either from inland or coastal fisheries is similar due to the nature of small-scale fisheries, and thus, a similar concept of community-based fisheries management has also been promoted through this project.

57. The Program Committee Member for Lao PDR appreciated the initiative of SEAFDEC in selecting Lao PDR as one of the project’s pilot sites. He also expressed the commitment of Lao PDR to support the project’s proposed activities in 2019.

**(11) Comparative Studies for Management of Purse Seine Fisheries in the Southeast Asian Region**

58. With regards to the outputs of the project which are useful for fisheries management in the region, the Program Committee Member for the Philippines supported the suggestion of IFRDMD that the stock boundaries of the target species should be delineated and the genetic markers should also be determined. However, he also added that there are more important small pelagic species that should be studied as well as reference points towards and harvest control rules to be established, for these transboundary stocks. As a way forward, he suggested that the biology of other important species such as round scads, neritic tunas, and sardines should also be studied. However, the current capacities of the countries should be enhanced in determining the necessary reference points.

59. The Program Committee Member for Thailand also supported the view expressed by IFRDMD and the Program Committee Member for the Philippines. While sharing information on the initiatives of Thailand in using the Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) and Total Allowable Effort (TAE) for the management of purse seine fisheries, she also informed the Program Committee that Thailand is planning to apply Total Allowable Catch (TAC) in the future. In this connection, she suggested that in the future plan of the project, assistance to be provided to the countries in the analysis of the appropriate MSY and TAE of the targeted species should also be considered.

**(12) Research for the Enhancement of Sustainable Utilization and Management of Sharks and Rays in the Southeast Asian Region**

60. The Program Committee was informed by the representative from MFRDMD that this project focuses on enhancing the capacity of the Member Countries on species identification of sharks and rays, which is supportive to the other projects such as the SEAFDEC-EU/CITES Sharks Project which deals with the improvement of data collection of sharks and rays.

**(13) Enhancing Sustainable Utilization and Management Scheme of Tropical Anguillid Eel Resources in Southeast Asia**

61. The Program Committee took note of the progress of implementation of the project as presented by the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat.

**(14) SEAFDEC-EU/CITES Sharks Project Phase II**



62. The Program Committee took note of the progress of implementation of the project SEAFDEC-EU/CITES Sharks Project Phase II as presented by the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat.

**(15) Strengthening the Effective Management Scheme with GIS (Geographic Information System) and RS (Remote Sensing) Technology for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture in the AMS**

63. The Program Committee was informed that this project would be implemented starting 2019 with support from the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF), and that the experiences gained from the implementation of this project would be shared after its completion, with the SEAFDEC Member Countries.

64. On the species that would be targeted under this project, the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat explained that the project would collect the geographical and environmental data from satellites, which would be mapped with catch data gathered from the inland fishing grounds. Therefore, there is no pre-defined target species in the project plan.

65. Considering that the pilot sites for this project are Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, and Thailand, the Program Committee Member for Malaysia inquired whether the project could be expanded or replicated in other countries in the future. In response, the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat indicated that the activities would not be extended to other sites. However, if 10-year time series satellite data could be made available and if data on catch by areas could be provided by the interested countries, the project could assist in determining the relationship between the catch data and environmental data. Nevertheless, the planned regional workshop on catch analysis using GIS Mapping/RS Technology would involve all the AMSs.

**4.1.2 Strategy II: Supporting the sustainable growth of aquaculture to complement fisheries and contribute to food security, poverty alleviation and livelihood of people in the region**

**(16) Environment-friendly, Sustainable Utilization and Management of Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources**

66. The Program Committee noted the progress of implementation of the project Environment-friendly, Sustainable Utilization and Management of Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources as presented by the Chief of AQD.

**(17) Reinforcement and Optimization of Fish Health Management and the Effective Dissemination in the Southeast Asian Region**

67. Considering that the project is scheduled to be completed in 2019, the Program Committee Member for Thailand expressed the country's interest in participating in Activity 5: Technology Extension and Demonstration considering that Thailand has large-scale aquaculture industry.

**4.1.3 Strategy III: Ensuring the food safety and quality of fish and fishery products for the Southeast Asian region**

**(18) Chemicals and Drug Residues in Fish and Fish Products in Southeast Asia- Biotoxins (ASP, AZA and BTX) and Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) in the ASEAN Region**

68. While commending MFRD for pursuing this project, the Program Committee Member for Thailand sought the cooperation of SEAFDEC in sustaining this project and suggested that future project activities could include harmonization of the techniques for detecting and analyzing biotoxins from harmful algal blooms (HABs) in the region, and development of the necessary reference points. In response, MFRD indicated that these concerns could be discussed during the end-of-project meeting.

#### **4.1.4 Strategy IV: Enhancing trade and compliance of the region's fish and fishery products with market requirements**

##### **(19) Cold Chain Management for Seafood**

69. The Program Committee took note of the progress and achievement of the project on the Cold Chain Management for Seafood. The Program Committee Member for Singapore also reported that the draft Guidelines on Cold Chain Management of Seafood would be submitted to the forthcoming Meeting of the FCG/ASSP for support, and subsequently, to the next SEAFDEC Council Meeting for endorsement.

##### **(20) Combating IUU Fishing in the Southeast Asian Region through Application of Catch Certification for Trading of Fish and Fishery Products**

70. With regards to the implementation of this project, the Program Committee Member for Indonesia expressed the view that since trading of fish and fishery products is dynamic, the real picture would be difficult to establish. He therefore reiterated the request made by the Program Committee Member for Indonesia in 2017 for SEAFDEC to update and synthesize the relevant information on international fish trade once a year and put up a link in the SEAFDEC website for information (*e.g.* price). In response, the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat explained that link to the information on requirement of important markets, has already been put up in the SEAFDEC website. Moreover, the Regional Fisheries Policy Network (RFPN) Members have been tasked to compile the information on international fish trade of their respective countries, the report of which would be uploaded on the SEAFDEC website by the end of 2018.

#### **4.1.5 Strategy V: Addressing cross-cutting issues, such as labor, gender and climate change, where related to international fisheries**

##### **(21) Assistance for Capacity Building in the Region to Address International Fisheries-related Issues**

71. The Program Committee Member for Myanmar expressed the appreciation to SEAFDEC for considering the proposal of Myanmar under this project and for organizing the introductory workshop on eACDS in Myanmar in 2018 as it helped in enhancing the capacity of the stakeholders on the concept and utilization of the eACDS.

72. The Program Committee Member for Malaysia acknowledged the effort of SEAFDEC in coordinating with the Department of Fisheries Malaysia for the conduct of the introductory workshop on eACDS in Malaysia in 2018, in response to the request made during the Fortieth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Program Committee in 2017. Moreover, the Program Committee Member for Malaysia also requested that Malaysia could be included as one of the project sites in 2019.

73. In response to the query of the Program Committee Member for Indonesia regarding the inclusion of fish trade related issues in the SEAFDEC website, the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat assured the Program Committee that information on fish trade-related issues in the SEAFDEC website will be updated regularly.

74. While noting that the eACDS has already been introduced and implemented in some SEAFDEC Member Countries, the Program Committee Member for the Philippines emphasized that the eACDS should not target only commercial fisheries, but also the small-scale fisheries as this is a very important sub-sector for the region.

75. The representative from BOBP-IGO requested SEAFDEC to share with the member countries of the Bay of Bengal (BOB) region the relevant documents including the requirements for eACDS to address trade related issues. He also shared the experience of the BOB region regarding the several trade barriers that have been emerging resulting in the increasing number of requests for BOBP-IGO to keep the stakeholders aware of

such emerging trade barriers, and on the need to extend support for the countries to move further in response to such requirements which has become imperative. Considering that the same situation could also be happening in the Southeast Asian region, he suggested that assistance to the concerned countries should be extended to enable them to cope with the requirements for traceability of their fish and fishery products, and to address such requirements.

#### **4.1.6 Strategy VI: Empowering SEAFDEC to strengthen its roles in the region and to improve its services to Member Countries**

##### **(22) Fisheries Resource Survey and Operational Plan for the M.V. SEAFDEC 2**

76. The Program Committee took note of the progress in the implementation of fishery resources surveys using the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 in 2018, and was also informed on the scheduled maintenance and upgrading of equipment onboard the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 during January-February 2019 which is being supported by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

77. With regards to the implementation of the project in 2019, the Program Committee Member for Viet Nam proposed to make use of the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 in the conduct of a survey of marine fisheries in Viet Nam for a period of two months from June to August 2019.

78. The Program Committee Member for Thailand also informed the Program Committee that Thailand is planning to conduct a training course on marine resources survey onboard a Thai research vessel in 2019. In this connection, she requested TD for the services of its resource persons to support the conduct of such training course and added that the details of such request would be submitted to SEAFDEC in due course.

79. In addition, the Program Committee Member for Malaysia also requested for the use of the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 for its mid-water trawl survey in Malaysian waters in 2019, the timeframe and budget of which would be subsequently communicated with TD.

##### **(23) Strengthening SEAFDEC Network for Sustainable Fisheries**

80. While expressing the appreciation to SEAFDEC for supporting Cambodia in the development of the country's database on marine fishing vessels through this project, the Program Committee Member for Cambodia informed the Program Committee that a census of the Cambodia's marine fishing vessels had been conducted, and that the units of the capacities of the vessels are being reclassified from horsepower (HP) to length class. SEAFDEC was therefore requested to extend assistance to Cambodia on the modification of its existing database system to accommodate the changes in vessels' classification. He also informed the Program Committee that Cambodia would start keying in the information on the country's licensed fishing vessels into the database in 2019.

81. The Program Committee Member for Lao PDR thanked SEAFDEC for sustaining the Regional Fisheries Policy Network (RFPN) and requested SEAFDEC to consider the possibility of continuing the project in 2019. He also emphasized the importance of dispatching the respective RFPN Members by the Member Countries to be stationed at the Secretariat, as this would not only strengthen human resource development but also enhance the cooperation among the countries as well as the communication channel between the respective countries' fisheries agencies and SEAFDEC.

82. With regards to the designation status of the RFPN Members, it was clarified that while this project through the JTF supports the RFPN Members for Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam; the other RFPN Members for Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, and Thailand are being supported by the SEAFDEC-Sweden Project.

83. While appreciating the progress of implementation of this project, especially its role in the establishment of a regional and/or sub-regional mechanism to address several fisheries-related issues, the Program Committee Member for Viet Nam expressed the concern on the need to sustain such mechanism after the completion of the project in 2019.

84. The representative from BOBP-IGO shared the information that member countries of the BOBP-IGO appreciated the need for the establishment of a sub-regional network mechanism. However, the issue about the long-term existence of this network after the completion of relevant project supporting the mechanism, needs to be carefully considered.

#### **4.1.7 Special Projects**

##### **(24) Fisheries and Habitat Management, Climate Change and Social Well-being in Southeast Asia**

85. The Program Committee took note of the significant achievements that were realized from the activities supported by the SEAFDEC-Sweden Project, particularly the Regional Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity (RPOA-Capacity), the RPOA for Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tunas in the ASEAN Region (RPOA-Neritic Tunas), the ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme, and the establishment of sub-regional cooperation and bilateral dialogues among countries in the region toward sustainable development and management of fisheries.

86. The Program Committee for Myanmar expressed the appreciation to the SEAFDEC-Sweden Project for extending support to several activities, especially the sub-regional cooperation for management of transboundary species, combating IUU fishing, and establishment of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) networks. He also expressed the view that SEAFDEC should request the Government of Sweden for the possible extension of the project after its completion in 2019. While also expressing gratitude for the support extended by the SEAFDEC-Sweden Project on the activities that aim to address gender equity in fisheries, he also requested SEAFDEC to promote the application of the SEAFDEC gender toolkit for Myanmar in 2019.

87. The Program Committee for Lao PDR also expressed the appreciation to the SEAFDEC-Sweden Project for implementing activities in the sub-regional Mekong River Basin that includes previous bilateral dialogues between Lao PDR and Cambodia, and Lao PDR and Thailand; for supporting the Training for Local Government Officers on EAFM and the Training of Trainers on E-EAFM; and for conducting the fishing gear survey in Bokeo Province, Lao PDR. For 2019, he requested SEAFDEC to continue extending its support for the strengthening of transboundary fisheries management in the upper Mekong River Basin between Lao PDR and Thailand, *i.e.* Bo Keo in Lao PDR and Chiang Rai in Thailand.

88. The Program Committee for Thailand thanked the SEAFDEC-Sweden Project for supporting the activities that enhance fisheries management toward sustainability as well as the capacity building for fisheries officers. He expressed the support of Thailand to the request made by the Program Committee for Lao PDR for continued implementation of the activities in areas between Bo Keo and Chiang Rai. He provided a brief background of the cooperation between Thailand and Lao DPR which was initiated by the Mekong River Commission (MRC) and other partners since 2012, and focused on compilation of data on the fishery resources, critical habitats and management measures. However, the project could not be continued due to budgetary constraints, and the restructuring of programs and the organization structure of MRC. He therefore sought support from the SEAFDEC-Sweden Project for the continuation of this activity to enhance the cooperation for the management of transboundary resources between Thailand and Lao PDR in the future.

89. While congratulating the SEAFDEC Secretariat for the sustained implementation of the project, the Program Committee Member for Malaysia also expressed the country's support to the continuation of this project, considering the benefits the region had gained from the promotion of sub-regional cooperation. He reiterated that different sub-regions are facing different issues, and thus specific approaches and attention are

necessary to address the issues. With regards to the activities on combating IUU fishing, closer communication among countries could already be realized, especially in the areas where the Project has already provided the platform for bilateral dialogues. He therefore encouraged that the initiative should be continued in the future, possibly through the extension of the support from the Government of Sweden.

90. The Program Committee Member for Viet Nam inquired about the progress of the assessment of neritic tuna resources in the region, particularly on the specific results, collaboration with relevant RFMOs, as well as the activities to be undertaken in 2019. In response, the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat clarified that up to the present, a series of activities have been conducted to build the capacity of the countries' researchers on stock assessment. In 2016-2017, stock assessment and risk assessment were conducted for longtail tuna and kawakawa based on data provided by the countries and the results were reported to the SEAFDEC Council and the ASWGFi Meetings in 2017. The results would also be presented at the IOTC meeting next year. For 2018, the project would continue to provide capacity building for the stock assessment of the Indo-Pacific king mackerel and the narrow-barred Spanish mackerel.

91. Considering that the results from the stock assessment and risk assessment including management recommendations were only noted by the SEAFDEC Council and the ASWGFi, the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat expressed the view that further discussion with the ASEAN Secretariat is necessary in order that such results could be submitted to policy makers in the future.

92. In this connection, the Program Committee Member for Thailand expressed the view that several studies have been undertaken such as the stock assessment of neritic tunas, which came up clear results showing the condition of the species, and the management required to ensure the sustainability of the species. She also emphasized that there is no RFMO responsible for neritic tunas in the Gulf of Thailand, while in the Andaman Sea, the management of this species is under the responsibility of the IOTC.

93. The representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat also informed the Program Committee that IOTC recognizes the works of SEAFDEC on stock assessment and risk assessment for neritic tunas in the Andaman Sea. However, considering that WCPFC seems to have no mandate and interest in coastal and neritic tuna resources, therefore, the work of SEAFDEC would complement the work of IOTC and would not duplicate with any of the stock assessment activities of WCPFC.

94. While reaffirming the importance of the activities on neritic tunas that are transboundary among countries in the region, the Program Committee Member for the Philippines confirmed that neritic tunas are not covered by WCPFC. SEAFDEC should therefore exert effort to sustain the activities on neritic tunas in order to obtain data that could serve as scientific basis towards the sustainable utilization of the species.

95. The SEAFDEC Secretary-General reiterated the recommendation made by the SEAFDEC Council during its 50<sup>th</sup> Meeting in 2018, that the future work of the Scientific Working Group (SWG) for neritic tunas could be expanded to other species that are important for the region, *e.g.* anchovies, mackerels.

## **(25) The Oceans and Fisheries Partnership (USAID Oceans)**

96. The Program Committee Member for Thailand expressed the appreciation to the USAID Oceans for implementing activities in pilot learning sites in the Philippines and Indonesia, and requested the USAID Oceans to suggest appropriate channel for sharing of information particularly on the progress of works in these sites so that the developed technologies could be adopted by other countries. With regards to the expansion site in Songkhla Province, Thailand, he reported that one multi-stakeholder workshop was organized in August 2018 which came up with fruitful results, and expressed the concern that there was no further activity afterwards. He reiterated the request made by Thailand during the last ASWGFi and the Oceans Technical Working Group (TWG) meeting in 2018 on how the information collected from the learning sites could be shared and how the activities in the expansion sites in Thailand could move forward. Furthermore, he also

requested the USAID Oceans to provide information on the exact schedule and detailed workplan in support of expansion I and II sites as indicated in the 2019 project workplan.

97. In response to the comment made by Thailand, the representative from the USAID Oceans clarified that the TWG meeting is the main forum for sharing of information on the progress of works. However, the project looks forward to discussing and sharing the information with Thailand. On the query about the expansion site in Thailand, the workplan of 2019 is currently being reviewed by the US Government, and once approved, the country will be informed on the schedule and detailed plans. Moreover, he also stated that reports of the workshops organized in Malaysia and Viet Nam are still being reviewed by the US Government and will be made available in December 2018.

98. The Program Committee Member for Malaysia also expressed the appreciation to the USAID Oceans for conducting a validation workshop on the gap analysis on catch documentation on 8 October 2018 in Malaysia and is now waiting for the final report from USAID Oceans.

## **4.2 Departmental Programs**

99. While considering the progress and achievements attained from the implementation of the SEAFDEC Departmental Programs in 2018 and the proposed programs for 2019 (**Annex 6**), the Program Committee offered recommendations for the improvement of the programs and endorsed the proposed programs taking into consideration the following recommendations.

### **4.2.1 Aquaculture Department**

100. The Program Committee took note of the progress and achievements of the Departmental Programs of AQD, namely: 1) Quality Seed for Sustainable Aquaculture; 2) Healthy and Wholesome Aquaculture; 3) Adaptation to Climate Change; 4) Maintaining Environmental Integrity through Responsible Aquaculture; 5) Meeting Social and Economic Challenges in Aquaculture; and 6) Priority and Special Projects.

101. The Program Committee Member for the Philippines extended the appreciation for the services rendered by AQD in the country's aquaculture programs. Subsequently, he suggested that AQD could continue sharing of the relevant information and technologies to the SEAFDEC Member Countries.

102. During the discussion, the Program Committee Member for Thailand shared the information that the use of probiotics has been introduced and applied in the industry for the prevention of EMS/APHND, not only in hatcheries but also in culture ponds. Furthermore, in the management of water quality for continuous reduction of organic matter to moderate level, the use of this clear water technique proved to be one of the key factors for the success of marine shrimp culture in Thailand. For the research on the effect of climate change on shrimp culture, the results showed that high water temperature reduced shrimp growth and the stocks require more oxygen consumption, and also impacted on the fluctuation of the feed consumed. She therefore recommended that farmers should apply appropriate feeding management during the period when the temperature is high.

103. The Program Committee Member for Malaysia also stated that several programs on aquaculture have been implemented in Malaysia, including 1) broodstock development especially focusing on grouper, 2) improvement of quality of seaweeds, *e.g.* *Kappaphycus* spp., 3) improvement of tiger shrimp production, 4) finding alternatives to fish meal, and 5) control of Tilapia Lake Virus (TiLV) in tilapia species. In this connection, the Chief of AQD explained that in the improvement of the quality of seaweeds, AQD makes use of tissue culture. For the hybrid grouper, its production entails high operating cost, and on aquatic feeds, these have been produced making use of locally available ingredients to reduce the production costs. Nonetheless, the Chief of AQD expressed the willingness to collaborate with Malaysia, upon request on any of these aspects.

104. The Program Committee Member for Myanmar requested AQD to consider sharing the knowledge on aquaculture technology to Member Countries especially on broodstock management of tiger shrimps as well as establishing the mechanism for sharing information with other AMSs. He also informed the Program Committee that Myanmar has established bilateral agreement with the Philippines and has approached AQD for aquaculture research and development. In this regard, the Chief of AQD reiterated that AQD is proposing the reinstatement of ADSEA (Aquaculture Development for Southeast Asia) as a forum for sharing of information on aquaculture technologies and identifying the strategies for sustainable and responsible aquaculture in the Southeast Asian region.

105. While commending the progress of the project implementation made by AQD, the Program Committee Member for Indonesia shared the views on the development of broodstock technology and suggested that AQD could consider including in its future studies, the culture of ornamental fish species, *e.g.* koi carp, especially for the benefit of countries that import broodstock from Japan. With regards to the seaweed industry, he stated that Indonesia exports seaweeds to the Philippines and China. In this connection, SEAFDEC was requested to consider supporting the activities related to increasing the value added to products that make use of seaweeds as raw materials.

#### **4.2.2 Training Department**

106. The Program Committee took note of the progress and achievements of the Departmental Programs of TD, namely: 1) Promotion and Strengthening of SEAFDEC Visibility and Image; 2) Tailor-made Training Programs; and 3) Improvement of Fisheries Technology and Reduction of the Impact from Fishing. The Program Committee also noted that henceforth, the program “Promotion and Strengthening of SEAFDEC Visibility and Image” will be merged with the program “Tailor-made Training Programs” and the new program title starting in 2019 would be “Promotion on Strengthening of SEAFDEC Visibility and Enhancing Human Capacity Building.”

107. The Program Committee Member for Cambodia while commending TD for the activities undertaken, raised the concern of Cambodia regarding the practice of some trawlers that continue to use small mesh-size of 1.5 cm, while the legally allowable mesh size is 4.0 cm. Furthermore, he also expressed the concern on the continued use of the rat-tail traps in the coastal areas of Cambodia that catch everything in the waters. He therefore requested TD to allocate funds and assist Cambodia in conducting surveys to investigate the impacts from these gears to the fishery resources.

108. The Program Committee Member for Thailand also requested TD to provide support in the implementation of the project “Promotion of Appropriate Technology and Practices of Fishing and Fishing Gear Engineering in Freshwater Area in Thailand,” of which the proposal would be submitted to TD in due course.

109. The Program Committee Member for Indonesia requested TD for technical support in the conduct of training on safety at sea, *e.g.* basic safety for fishing vessels in accordance with the IMO regulations, as well as training to change the use of fishing gears that had recently become illegal.

110. The Program Committee Member for Malaysia expressed the appreciation to TD for co-organizing the advance fishing gear specialists training on 24-27 September 2018 in Malaysia. He also informed the Program Committee that Malaysia is planning to seek more support from TD in the future, the details of which would be subsequently relayed to TD.

111. The Program Committee Member for the Philippines expressed the appreciation to TD for its efforts in improving fishing gear technologies, and looked forward to seeing the results of the proposed activity in 2019 on the improvement of the technology to enhance the sustainability of marine fishery resources.

112. In response to such requests, the Chief of TD indicated that TD would try to accommodate the requirements of the Member Countries. However, as the funding for the Departmental Programs are derived mainly from the host Government, such requests may be incorporated in the appropriate projects when funding is available.

#### **4.2.3 Marine Fishery Resources Development and Management Department**

113. The Meeting took note of the project proposal under the collaborative research between Japan International Research Center for Agriculture Sciences (JIRCAS) and MFRDMD, as well as the proposed activities for 2019 under such the collaborative research.

#### **4.2.4 Inland Fishery Resources Development and Management Department**

114. The Program Committee was informed of the two Departmental Programs of IFRDMD, namely: 1) Stock Assessment and Fish Production Potential of Inland Fisheries; and 2) Center of Excellence in Science and Technology on Inland Fisheries Management, proposed to be implemented starting 2019.

115. With regards to the project “Stock Assessment and Fish Production Potential of Inland Fisheries,” and while noting that the methodology would involve the mark-recapture method, the Chief of MFRDMD shared his experience that this method needs effective awareness raising so that fishers would be encouraged to report the recaptured marked fish after release. Furthermore, on the use of hydro acoustic research to determine the fish abundance, this method needs sufficient samples to support the echogram verification for estimating the fish abundance considering that differences in species and length of fish will impact on the estimation of the biomass.

116. In response, the Chief of IFRDMD explained that the mark-recapture method was used only for the stock assessment to understand the standing stock instead of the fish migration. In the selected study site, fishes were captured, marked, released, and recaptured using non-selective fishing gear. The mark-recapture method is used in the particular area (floodplains) where the use of hydro-acoustic method is not possible.

### **4.3 Other Programs**

117. The Program Committee considered and endorsed progress of implementation in 2018 and the corresponding plans for the following programs:

#### **(1) Implementing the Lower Mekong Fish Passage Initiative in Cambodia, Thailand, and Viet Nam**

118. The Program Committee was informed on the progress of the project implementation in 2018 and proposed activities of this project in 2019 in three countries, namely: Cambodia, Thailand, and Viet Nam (**Annex 7**).

119. While noting that the main activity of this project deals with the construction of a fish passage facility, the Program Committee for Viet Nam inquired about the appropriate working mechanism of this activity, especially on whether this should be placed under the fisheries or irrigation department. In response, it was clarified that this project was undertaken mainly by the US Department of Interior (US-DOI), but TD had been engaged in following-up with respect to the construction and disbursing the payments to local contractors. In undertaking the project activities however, the US-DOI had communicated with the irrigation department and construction company through the US Embassy in the respective countries. Communication between SEAFDEC and the respective fisheries agencies serves only as a channel to keep them informed on the activities.



## **V. PIPELINE PROJECTS AND EMERGING NEEDS FOR PREPARATION OF FUTURE PROJECT PROPOSALS**

### **(1) Development of Stock Assessment Method and Strengthening of Resources Management Measures on Tropical Anguillid Eels in ASEAN Region**

120. The Program Committee was informed on the concept note of the pipeline project “Development of Stock Assessment Method and Strengthening of Resources Management Measures on Tropical Anguillid Eels in ASEAN Region” (**Annex 8**), and that the SEAFDEC Secretariat is in the process of seeking support from JAIF for the implementation of this project. The Program Committee was also informed about the objective of this project which is to develop and improve stock assessment methods and resources management measures for securing the sustainable use and conservation of tropical anguillid eels in the ASEAN region.

### **(2) Second Phase of Enhancing Coastal Community Resilience for Sustainable Livelihood and Coastal Resources Management**

121. The Program Committee was informed that the project “Enhancing Coastal Community Resilience for Sustainable Livelihood and Coastal Resources Management” supported by the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) with specific focus on the Muslim countries of the ASEAN, namely: Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, and Malaysia, would be completed in 2018. In this connection, MFRDMD has formulated the proposal for the Phase II of the Project in order to extend the similar initiative to other Member Countries, *e.g.* Cambodia, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam. The said proposal would be submitted for possible funding support from JAIF (**Annex 9**).

122. The representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat shared the experience in developing project proposals for funding by JAIF including the duration of the project implementation which should be usually 1-2 years, and the proposal should indicate the detailed budget for all planned activities, with clear indicators for evaluation of the activities. Furthermore, submission of the proposal to JAIF requires prior consultation with concerned agencies, *e.g.* the Japanese Government, ASEAN Secretariat, and officer in charge of JAIF.

123. While expressing the appreciation to the SEAFDEC Secretariat for providing such information, the Chief of MFRDMD agreed to improve the proposal including the project duration which should be completed within two years, and work with the SEAFDEC Secretariat on the submission of the proposal to JAIF as well as to other potential donors.

## **VI. COOPERATION WITH DONORS, NON-MEMBER GOVERNMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL/REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

124. The representatives from the collaborating partners of SEAFDEC attending the Program Committee Meeting were invited to inform the Program Committee of their relevant fisheries programs and the potential areas of mutual cooperation with SEAFDEC.

125. The representative from the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO), *Dr. Vivekanandan Elayaperumal* thanked SEAFDEC for the invitation extended to BOBP-IGO to participate in the 41PCM. He stated that the mission of SEAFDEC and BOBP-IGO which is to “promote and facilitate concerted actions among their members to ensure the sustainability of fisheries,” is very similar and could be gleaned from their respective programs of activities. For the BOBP-IGO, he informed the Program Committee that its programs include: 1) Regional Programmes on Safety at Sea for Artisanal and Small-scale Fishermen, 2) Regional Programme for Fish Stocks Assessment in the Bay of Bengal, 3) Capacity Building and Information Services for Fisheries Development and Management in the Bay of Bengal Region, 4) Capacity in Preparation of Fishery Performance Indicators, 5) National/Regional Workshops/Conferences on Important Fisheries Issues, and 6) Ocean Partnership Project for Sustainable Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation-Models for Innovation and Reform. He also reiterated that SEAFDEC and BOBP-IGO could work together to

achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by addressing the SDG 14: Life Below Water. His statement appears as **Annex 10**.

126. The Interim Executive Director of the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food Security (CTI-CFF), *Dr. Hendra Yusran Siry* thanked SEAFDEC for giving him the opportunity to speak on behalf of the CTI-CFF Regional Secretariat and the CT6 countries. He recalled that the five-year MOU between SEAFDEC and CTI-CFF signed during the 47th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council in Thailand in April 2015, deals with the promotion of collaborative works and elimination of overlapping efforts between SEAFDEC and CTI-CFF. He also informed the Program Committee that CTI-CFF is currently developing its second Regional Plan of Action (RPOA 2.0) which emphasizes on the regional actions that would benefit the Coral Triangle (CT) region, and based on the lessons learned from other regional organizations such as SEAFDEC, to expand the effective conservation practices in the CT region. He also expressed the concern on the sustainability of the live reef fish for food trade (LRFFT) which is an unchecked and unregulated industry threatening the poor communities relying on this industry but overlooking the benefits of the true value of the industry. Since the MOU between SEAFDEC and CTI-CFF would end in April 2020, he encouraged the Program Committee to make the most of this collaborative arrangement. His Statement appears as **Annex 11**.

127. The representative from the Gifu Prefectural Inland Fisheries Training Center *Mr. Yutaka Nakai* expressed his appreciation to SEAFDEC for the invitation to attend the 41PCM. He presented an overview of the activities undertaken by the Training Center under its Fisheries Section, Aquaculture Section, and Ecological Environment Section. He indicated that the “Ayu of Nagara River System” of Gifu Prefecture has been declared as Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS) by FAO in 2002. “Ayu” is the most important fish species in Gifu Prefecture. He also informed the Program Committee that the training program offered by the Center in 2018 has eight (8) participants from the SEAFDEC Member Countries and Departments, and for the training planned in 2019, the AMSs could send their participants through the collaborative arrangement between Gifu Prefecture and SEAFDEC. In this regard, he mentioned that further information could be obtained from the Gifu Prefecture website or through the SEAFDEC Secretariat. His Statement appears as **Annex 12**.

128. The representative from Embassy of Sweden in Bangkok and Sida, *Ms. Åsa Hedén*, thanked SEAFDEC for inviting Sweden to take part the 41PCM. She also thanked the Director General for Fisheries Malaysia for hosting the Meeting in Langkawi, Malaysia. She reiterated that SEAFDEC is an important development partner to Sweden in the delivery of SDG 14: Life below water. She added that SEAFDEC as a technical and advisory body to the ASEAN, succeeded to build capacity and management of transboundary marine resources, enhancing the conditions for sustainable fisheries in the region. She expressed the appreciation of the Sweden Embassy in Bangkok to SEAFDEC for putting more emphasis on gender awareness and capacity building in the fishing sector during the last years. Agreeing to support the initiative to develop a comprehensive regional Gender Strategy for the ASEAN Member States based on the FAO guidelines, is a major achievement of the SEAFDEC Council. Finally, she wished SEAFDEC all the best in its important works for the oceans. Her statement appears as **Annex 13**.

129. In the Statement of the U.S. Agency for International Development Regional Development Mission for Asia (USAID/RDMA) which was read by the representative from TD, the USAID/RDMA reiterated that through the USAID Oceans, USAID and SEAFDEC have been working together since 2015. Henceforth, USAID has seen significant shift in regional interests for the eCDT, sustainable fisheries management, and human welfare. In addition, the USAID commended SEAFDEC for its effort in the continued development of eACDS and expressed its full commitment to support the system and its adoption throughout the region. USAID also expressed its commitment to strengthen its relationship with SEAFDEC, especially in promoting its leadership and advancing the fisheries priorities of its Member Countries. Her Statement appears as **Annex 14**.

## **VII. OTHER MATTERS**

## **7.1 Way Forward for Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region Towards 2020**

130. The Program Committee took note of the proposal made by the SEAFDEC Secretariat on the “Way Forward on Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region Towards 2020” (**Annex 15**). The Program Committee was also informed that the proposal and the workplan would be discussed during forthcoming FCG/ASSP Meeting, after which it would be proposed to the SEAFDEC Council Meeting in 2019.

## **7.2 Update on JTF-VII**

131. The Program Committee took note of the updates on the JTF-VII (**Annex 16**) which comprises three pillars, namely: 1) strengthening the promotion of sustainable fisheries; 2) promotion of sustainable aquaculture and resource enhancement; and 3) promotion of sustainable development in inland fisheries; and that the JTF-VII would cover the 5-year period starting from 2020. The Committee was also informed that the draft annual plan of the JTF-VII would be presented and discussed at the forthcoming Program Committee Meeting in 2019.

132. The Program Committee Member for Japan informed the Program Committee that he would make his best effort to follow-up with the Ministry of Finance of Japan for securing the necessary budget for the JTF-VII in order to meet the requirements of the SEAFDEC Member Countries.

133. The Program Committee Member for Malaysia expressed the appreciation to the Government of Japan for supporting the countries in the realization of the Resolution and Plan of Action Toward 2020 through the the JTF. He therefore requested Japan to continue its support through the next JTF.

134. The Program Committee Member for Indonesia informed the Program Committee that during the 40<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) held in October 2018 in Hanoi, Viet Nam, the Minister for Indonesia expressed the appreciation of Indonesia to the cooperation rendered by the Government of Japan through SEAFDEC, and looked forward to having continued support from Japan to the AMSs through the JTF.

135. The Program Committee Member for Thailand also expressed the gratitude to the Government of Japan for extending support to SEAFDEC, not only financially but also technically. She also requested the Government of Japan to continue supporting SEAFDEC through the JTF; and informed the Program Committee that Thailand would send a letter to the Government of Japan to seek for continued support through the JTF.

136. The Program Committee Member for the Philippines also expressed the appreciation to the Government of Japan for its continuing support for the implementation of programs that benefit the SEAFDEC Member Countries. He suggested that the SEAFDEC Secretariat may consider drafting a Council Resolution expressing the gratitude and appreciation of the Member Countries to the Government of Japan and requesting for continued support through the JTF-VII.

137. While also expressing the gratitude to the Government of Japan for the continued support to Southeast Asian countries through SEAFDEC which contributed to the sustainable development of fisheries as important source of protein, food, income, and economic development of the countries, the Secretary-General of SEAFDEC informed the Program Committee that SEAFDEC will reiterate the countries’ appreciation during the next Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council in 2019.

## **7.3 SEAFDEC Gender Strategy: Mainstreaming Gender in SEAFDEC and Its Programs**

138. The Program Committee noted the SEAFDEC Council's directives, and the progress in the development of the draft SEAFDEC Gender Strategy (**Annex 17**).

#### **7.4 Procedures for Inviting Other Organizations and Non-member Governments to Attend the SEAFDEC Council Meeting**

139. The Program Committee took note of the draft Procedures for Inviting Other Organizations and Non-member Governments to Attend the SEAFDEC Council Meeting (**Annex 18**), which was prepared by the SEAFDEC Secretariat in response to the directive of the SEAFDEC Council during its Fiftieth Meeting in March 2018. The Program Committee also noted that the criteria for organizations to attend the Council Meeting are based on the "Guidelines on the Status of Various Organizations and Private Agencies Participation in SEAFDEC Programs" adopted by the SEAFDEC Council at its Thirty-second Meeting in 2000, with additional elaboration only on the procedures for extending invitation.

140. While expressing support to the draft Procedures prepared by the SEAFDEC Secretariat, the Program Committee Member for Japan suggested that the official letter to notify the final decision of the Council should specify only the final decision whether the proposed attendance has been approved or not, while the record of the decisions by individual Council Directors should be kept in the Secretariat and should not be disclosed.

141. In response to the query from the Program Committee Member for Indonesia about the Procedures, it was clarified that invitations would be extended to current donors and organizations having legal working relationship with SEAFDEC, and to the ASEAN countries that are not SEAFDEC Member Countries, and these invitations would not need the prior approval of the Council. However, for the attendance of other organizations and agencies, the proposals regarding their attendance should emanate from the host Member Countries, and upon receipt, these will be disseminated by the SEAFDEC Secretariat to the SEAFDEC Council Directors for consideration.

142. The Program Committee Member for Myanmar suggested that the participation of Other Organizations and Non-member Governments as "Observer" should be elaborated further, *e.g.* indicating the roles and restrictions for observers.

143. The Program Committee Member for Singapore also sought clarification on whether similar procedures for other organizations to attend the PCM are also available. In response, the representative from the SEAFDEC Secretariat indicated that the "Guidelines on the Status of Various Organizations and Private Agencies Participation in SEAFDEC Programs" adopted by the Council in 2000 already provided the criteria on various types of organizations and agencies that can attend the Meetings of the SEAFDEC Council and Program Committee, and technical meetings of SEAFDEC.

144. The Program Committee Member for Brunei Darussalam suggested that once the Procedures is approved by the SEAFDEC Council, this should be made available in the SEAFDEC website.

#### **7.5 Capacity Development Workshop on Stock Status Assessment and Estimation of SDG Indicator 14.4.1 for the Asia Pacific Region**

145. The Program Committee took note of the prospectus for the Capacity Development Workshop on Stock Status Assessment and Estimation of SDG Indicator 14.4.1: Fish Stocks Sustainability for the Asia Pacific Region (**Annex 19**), and that this Workshop would be organized by FAO tentatively during the second half of 2019. The Program Committee also noted that SEAFDEC was approached by FAO to serve as coordinator and to facilitate the arrangements for this Workshop, of which the participants would include the Member and non-Member Countries of SEAFDEC.

146. The Program Committee Member for Viet Nam expressed the challenges encountered by the Member Countries in reporting the progress on SDG Indicator 14.4.1. She proposed that the activities related to estimation of this SDG Indicator should be conducted on an annual basis and adopted by the SEAFDEC Council.

## **7.6 Formation of Singapore Food Agency**

147. The Program Committee Member for Singapore informed the Program Committee that from 1 April 2019, a new government agency, the Singapore Food Agency (SFA) will be formed under the Ministry of Environment and Water Resource. The Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) will then cease to operate. SFA is setup to oversee food safety & security and it will bring together all food-related resources and capabilities from related government agencies, including AVA, for a holistic management of the food industry from farm to fork. SFA will continue to uphold Singapore's commitment to implement the MFRD programme and propose that the Marine Aquaculture Centre (MAC), which is under the SFA, would be the Collaborating Centre to implement the MFRD programme, instead of the current Post-Harvest Technology Centre. This matter would be proposed to the forthcoming meeting of the SEAFDEC Council in 2019 for consideration.

## **VIII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FORTIETH MEETING OF THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE**

### **8.1 Adoption of Report of the 41PCM**

148. The Program Committee adopted its recommendations during the Forty-first Meeting of the Program Committee on 5-7 November 2018 in Langkawi, Malaysia. The Program Committee also took note of the process that the Report of the 41PCM would be submitted to the Fifty-first Meeting of SEAFDEC Council and to the ASEAN through the Fisheries Consultative Group of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (FCG/ASSP).

### **8.2 Date and Venue of the Forty-second Meeting of the Program Committee**

149. In considering the date and venue of the Forty-second Meeting of the Program Committee, the Chief of Training Department (TD) informed the Program Committee that TD would host the Forty-second Meeting in Thailand. He also informed the Program Committee that TD would seek the guidance of the SEAFDEC Secretariat in finalizing the schedule, venue and related arrangements for the Meeting.

## **IX. CLOSING OF THE MEETING**

150. In his Closing Remarks, the Chairperson of the Program Committee thanked the Program Committee Members, representatives from collaborating organizations, the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments, as well as the observers for their valuable inputs and recommendations on the projects and activities of SEAFDEC. He also thanked the SEAFDEC Marine Fishery Resources Development and Management Department (MFRDMD) for hosting the Meeting and the meeting secretariat staff for their efforts in making the 41PCM a success. He then declared the Meeting closed. His Closing Address appears as **Annex 20**.