



**The 2nd Regional Scientific and Technical Committee Meeting for
the SEAFDEC/UN Environment/GEF Project on Establishment and Operation of
a Regional System of Fisheries *Refugia* in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand**

21st – 23rd May 2019

Thansur Sokha Hotel, Kampot Province (Fisheries Refugia Site), Cambodia

**OPENING SPEECH
BY CHIAR OF THE REGIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

Good Morning:

- Dr. SOMBOON Siriraksophon, Project Director, SEAFDEC/UNEP/GEF Fisheries Refugia
- Members of Scientific and Technical Committee, represented from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippine, Thailand and Vietnam
- Project experts
- PCU members
- Distinguish, Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of HE Eng Cheasan, Director General of Fisheries Administration, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, I am very pleased to have the privilege this morning to open the 2nd Regional Scientific and Technical Committee Meeting for the SEAFDEC/UN Environment/GEF Project on Establishment and Operation of a Regional System of Fisheries Refugia in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand in Cambodia. On the occasion I would like to extend my warmest welcome and sincere appreciation to your participations and stay in Thansur Sokha Hotel on the top of Bokor Mountain, Kampot Province Cambodia and especially to our PCU for co- hosting the 2nd RSTC in Cambodia. Please apology for any inconveniences of your travel from Phnom Penh International Airport to Kampot province.

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Kampot is one of four coastal provinces of Cambodia, located in the Southwest of the country. It has a coastline of around 45 km on the Gulf of Thailand. It is rich in has abundant natural resources. The provincial town is named Kampot and sits near the base of the abundant green Elephant Mountains and the famous Bokor Hill Station. The Thansour Bokor is 32 kilometers and 1,101 meters up from the national road N. 3 near Kampot, is the Bokor Mountain Hill Station, in Bokor National Park. Hope you can enjoy with faithful climate, water fall, pagoda and and other tourist sites.

The Cambodian fishery sector is made up of the marine, coastal and inland fishery, estimated to be with a total of about 1,000,000 tons of fish caught annually. Fisheries provide livelihoods to about 6.7 million people and fish is the second most important food source for Cambodians, after rice: The average annual supply of fish per capita is 52.4 kg, with fish accounting for up to 81.5% of total animal protein supply, with the total fishery valued at about US\$1.25 billion, and providing 8-10% of the country's GDP. Thus, the fisheries are an essential provider of food security and nutrition, public and private revenue, and livelihoods for the nation.

An important milestone of sector management is the Strategic Planning Framework for Fisheries: 2010-2019 (SPF) which was fully adopted by the Royal Government of Cambodia. The SPF was integrated into the "Rectangular Strategy" for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency Phase III (RS III) and the National Strategic Development Plan 2014-2018 (NSDP) and is fully aligned with the Agriculture Sector Strategic Development Plan (ASDP). The updated Strategic Planning Framework for Fisheries: 2015-2024 provides guidance to contribute to the Royal Government's vision for the future, where the Cambodian people continue

to benefit from abundant fisheries resources.

Recent measures to improve management and development of the sector and the conservation of fisheries resources include the formulation of a National Plan of Action to prevent, deter and eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing, the National Plan of Control and Inspection and the revision of the Fisheries Law.

The draft 10-year Strategic Plan for Fisheries Conservation and Management has been formulated to continue these efforts and pursue a vision where "Cambodia's fisheries resources and ecosystems are restored where depleted, conserved and protected, for livelihoods and food security and nutrition of present and future generations". Its overall objective entails that "All stakeholders collaborate to ensure that Cambodia's fisheries are utilized sustainably, conserved and managed in an environmentally non-degrading, ecologically appropriate, economically viable, and socially acceptable manner".

Our distinguished ladies and gentlemen

We recognize and strongly support the Marine Fisheries Refugia as an effective tool to protect the key aquatic species and habitats to ensure sustainable resource utilization, therefore, we already classified it as a type of fisheries management area included in the amended law of fisheries, especially in article 11, 12, 18 and others.

Furthermore, as I mentioned above, we have been formulating a 10 Year Strategic Plan for Fisheries Conservation and Management and the creation and operation of marine fisheries refugia are included using our current practical work.

On behalf of the Fisheries Administration, I would like to once again express our deep appreciation to UNEP/GEFF and SEAFDEC, as well as our member governments, for their support in Establishment and Operation of a Regional System of Fisheries Refugia in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand.

I wish to confer to each of you the Buddhist blessings of longevity, good health, peace and prosperity and my sincere desire for a successful meeting and fruitful results.

I am now very pleased to announce the opening of the 2nd Regional Scientific and Technical Committee Meeting in Thansour Sokha Hotel, Kampot Province, Cambodia.

Thank you very much!" Thank You!