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**Technical Consultative Meeting
on Drafting of the Regional Action Plan for Management of Transboundary Species
Rastrelliger brachysoma in the Gulf of Thailand Sub-region
12-13 September 2019, Chonburi Province, Thailand**

PROVISIONAL PROSPECTUS

I. BACKGROUND

Mackerels (Family Scombridae) particularly the Indo-pacific mackerel also known as short mackerel (*Rastrelliger brachysoma*) are the most economically important small pelagic fishes in the Southeast Asian region contributing about 38% to the small pelagic fisheries production or 11% to the total capture fisheries production in 2010. Indonesia is the major contributor to the region's total mackerel production, the highest catch of mackerels was recorded in 2012 was at 3,757,030 metric tons (SEAFDEC, 2014).

Gulf of Thailand Subregion is one of the important fishing ground for *R. brachysoma* where the peak highest catch of mackerel in the Gulf of Thailand (GoT) area caught by purse seine and falling net was in 1996 at 328,955 MT while the lowest catch had 3 peaks, in 1999, 2005 and 2010 at 289,285 MT, 283,984 MT and 259,354.56 MT, respectively that never reached 300,000 MT as recorded in 1996.

In general, *R. brachysoma* are caught by various types of fishing gears in the GoT and the three major types recorded in 2008 are purse seines (45%), driftnets (31%), trawls (18%) and others (6%). The landings show declining trends indicating that the mackerel stocks in the South China Sea and GoT are already overexploited. For species composition of purse seine catch, Indian mackerels made up about 25% of the total catch while short mackerels account for only 2% (SEAFDEC, 2017).

The study conducted by Bidin and Kassim (2007) estimated that the average exploitation rates (E) for *R. kanagurta* is at 0.69 from 2002 to 2006 in four countries bordering the South China Sea. This higher E value was also recorded for *R. brachysoma* in a study done in Malaysia and Philippines with average exploitation rate of 0.66. It could be concluded that the mackerel resources in the South China Sea during the study period are already overexploited.

With the support from SEAFDEC-Sweden project, the issues of stock status and transboundary areas of *R. brachysoma* has been addressed at many consultative meetings under the bi-lateral dialogues between Thailand and Cambodia, Cambodia and Viet Nam, Thailand and Malaysia. In addition, at the Gulf of Thailand Sub-region, the member countries of the GoT namely Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand and Viet Nam agreed to focus in the management of transboundary species especially *R. brachysoma*. Technical support on data collections and scientific research such as DNA study and analysis in collaboration with Research Institutes and University in Thailand have been facilitated since 2018 to identify stock structure of *R. brachysoma* and to support the information for management policy at national and sub-regional levels.

Under the SEAFDEC/UNEP/GEF Project on Establishment and Operation of a Regional System of Fisheries Refugia in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand (Fishery Refugia), the transboundary areas for *R. brachysoma* has been addressed particularly in the border between Thailand and Cambodia, and Cambodia and Viet Nam. The best practices and action plan for management of this transboundary species needed to be further discussed to ensure that the *R. brachysoma* are sustainable harvested.

Taking into accounts, the results from the Expert Group Meeting in December 2018 suggested to follow up and actions at national and regional level included carry out research necessary on *R. brachysoma*, monitoring (data collection), and control (specific measure and legislation) as well as linkage to

Fisheries Refugia project requirements, SEAFDEC proposes the Technical Consultation Meeting for Drafting the Regional Action Plan* for Fisheries Management of *R. brachysoma* in the GoT Sub-region. The Meeting hosts by SEAFDEC Sweden project in collaboration with the Fisheries Refugia project.

II. OBJECTIVE

Brainstorm to draft the Regional Action Plan for fisheries management of *R. brachysoma* and its habitat in the Gulf of Thailand sub-region

III. EXPECTED OUTPUT

Gulf of Thailand sub-regional Action Plan for fisheries management of *R. brachysoma*.

IV. EXPECTED OUTCOME

Gulf of Thailand Sub-regional countries agreed and action on the *R. brachysoma* management plans beneficial to sustainability of fisheries resource and healthy of habitats as well as well-being of communities.

V. MEETING DATE AND VENUE

Technical Consultative Meeting on Drafting of the Regional Action Plan for Management of Transboundary Species: *R. brachysoma* in the Gulf of Thailand Sub-region will be held on 12-13 September 2019, in Pattaya city, Chonburi Province, Thailand

VI. EXPECTED PARTICIPANTS

- 1) Representatives from the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand Region: countries namely: Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam
 - SEAFDEC-Sweden Project fund for
 - a Focal Point or SEAFDEC National Focal point for the Gulf of Thailand Sub-region
 - One representative form senior official who is responsible for data collection, monitoring and assessment of transboundary species stock focus on *R. brachysoma*
 - SEAFDEC/UNEP/GEF on Fisheries Refugia Project fund for:
 - A Fisheries Refugia National Focal Point
 - A Fisheries Refugia National Scientific and Technical Focal Point
- 2) Resource person from research/academic institutes and relevant Organization including SEAFDEC/UNEP/GEF Fisheries *refugia* Project, FAO/RAP, and etc.
- 3) Representatives from SEAFDEC Secretariat, and relevant SEAFDEC Departments

* Regional Action Plan (RAP) for Management of *R. brachysoma* is meant to serve as a foundational document, of a non-legally binding nature, that identifies practices and processes to support implementation of the ASEAN SEAFDEC Resolution among the country in the GoT Sub-region. It marks an evolutionary step towards a concerted regional approach to supporting countries in their efforts to manage transboundary fish stock