



**Report of the Experts Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action
on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna in the ASEAN Region**

Krabi Province, Thailand

18-20 June 2014

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ASEAN Region**

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Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center

The Secretariat

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Experts Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the ASEAN Region was convened in Krabi Province, Thailand from 18 to 20 June 2014. The Meeting was attended by representatives from ASEAN countries, namely: Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. Representatives from the Embassy of Sweden, ASEAN Tuna Working Group, ASEAN-USAID MARKET (Maximizing Agricultural Revenue through Knowledge, Enterprise Development, and Trade) Project, Sustainable Fisheries Partnership and USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia. Officials from SEAFDEC and members of the Regional Fisheries Policy Network, also attended the Meeting. The list of participants appears as **Annex 1**.

II. OPENING OF THE MEETING

2. The Deputy Secretary-General of SEAFDEC, *Mr. Hajime Kawamura* welcomed the participants to the Experts Group Meeting and highlighted that through the SEAFDEC-Sweden Project, the regional and sub-regional cooperation for the promotion of sustainable utilization of neritic tuna could be strengthened. He added that the development of the Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the ASEAN Region would be beneficial to the small-scale fishers, most of whom generally exploit the neritic tuna resources in the region. He also considered the Meeting very significant and timely since it has become urgent to address concerns on the sustainability of neritic tuna fisheries in many ASEAN countries, especially Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam, where their total fisheries catch comprises large amount of neritic tunas.

3. He recalled that during the 46th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council, SEAFDEC was tasked to address the urgent concern of declining neritic tuna catch for food security of the future generations through the development of Regional Plan of Action or RPOA for sustainable neritic tuna fisheries and management. He then encouraged everyone to actively work for the development of the RPOA to ensure the sustainability of neritic tuna resources in the Southeast Asian region, and declared the Experts Group Meeting open. His Opening Remarks appears as **Annex 2.g**

III. BACKGROUND AND AGENDA OF THE MEETING

4. The SEAFDEC Policy and Program Coordinator, *Dr. Somboon Siriraksophon* summarized the important issues that need to be addressed at this Experts Group Meeting. He cited that a tuna study was carried out by SEAFDEC Training Department under the FCG/ASSP program supported by the Japanese Trust Fund in 2008-2012 in five major tuna-producing countries with focus on tuna exploitation within the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of SEAFDEC Member Countries. This study provided the foundation for the development of Plans of Action for the sustainable utilization of tuna resources in the region, and it influenced the decision of SEAFDEC Council during its 45th Meeting for SEAFDEC to develop a Regional Plan of Action (RPOA-neritic tuna) for Regional Cooperation focusing on neritic tuna fisheries.

In response, SEAFDEC organized the Technical Consultation Meeting (TCM) on Neritic Tuna in October 2013 under the SEAFDEC-Sweden Framework. That Meeting identified and prioritized issues that need to be addressed in the development of the RPOA-neritic tuna and charted an initial the way forward. The Meeting also classified the prioritized issues to be considered in developing the RPOA-Neritic Tuna into two levels, i.e. national and regional levels.

5. In addition, he explained the scope and objectives of the Regional Plan of Action as agreed upon during the October 2013 TCM, to include five objectives, namely: improving fisheries productivity; improving access to markets; improving data collection and development of key indicators; improving sustainable interaction between fisheries and marine ecosystem; promoting regional cooperation; and addressing social issues. After expounding on these objectives, he explained the brief summary of the goals and the expected outputs of this Experts Group Meeting. His presentation appears as **Annex 3**.

IV. GROUP DISCUSSION ON DRAFTING OF THE RPOA-NERITIC TUNAS AND WORK PLANS FOR 2014 AND 2015

6. The participants were split into two (2) groups to discuss the consolidated country inputs that were solicited before the Experts Group Meeting. Taking such information into consideration, Group A was tasked to review and discuss the issues and action plans related to policy and management aspects, with respect to **Objective 1: Improving Sustainable Fisheries Management**, and **Objective 2: Improving Access to Markets**, while Group B reviewed and discussed the issues and action plans on research relevant to **Objective 3: Improving Data Collection and Development of Key Indicators**, and **Objective 4: Improving Sustainable Interaction between Fisheries and Marine Ecosystem**. Discussion on **Objective 5: Promoting Regional Cooperation**, and on **Objective 6: Addressing Social Issues** was done during the Plenary Session involving both Groups.

7. After assimilating the different ideas, concerns and issues that were brought out and shared during the group discussion, taking into account specific issues and applicable action plans in the participants' respective countries, it was resolved with negotiated arrangements that regulations would be harmonized in accordance with the regional standpoint for drafting the Regional Plan of Action (RPOA). After reviewing and thoroughly discussing the final draft outputs of the groups that were presented during the Plenary Session, the Experts Group Meeting adopted the final draft of the RPOA as shown in **Annex 4**.

V. PLENARY DISCUSSION ON THE FRAMEWORK AND WORK PLANS

8. During the Plenary discussion, some very important suggestions were presented for the sustainability and management of the region's neritic tuna resources. In addressing the concern about the impacts of climate change to changes in neritic tuna stocks, the Meeting agreed that this would require involvement of stakeholders at regional and sub-regional levels. The conduct of particular research studies on the impact, adaptation and mitigation measures on the effects of climate change on fisheries particularly on neritic tunas was therefore recommended.

9. As for improving the compliance to rules and regulations by stakeholders and access to markets, the Meeting suggested that this could be promoted in parallel with the need to address IUU fishing in the ASEAN region. IUU fishing could be in the form of transshipment of catch, double flagging, and poaching. On the need to improve operational procedures at landing sites as

means of mitigating IUU fishing, the Meeting agreed to develop minimum ASEAN standard requirements for landing sites to include the aspects on ensuring the safety of workers and food safety, as well as hygiene and sanitary measures. Moreover, enhancing the trading system of fishery products would require the need to comply with catch certification and documentation requirements, e.g. those imposed by the EU, to enable the ASEAN countries to sustain the export of neritic tuna fish and fishery products. Post-harvest losses and product quality deterioration could be addressed by providing techniques and promoting proper fish handling onboard fishing vessels and at ports. In order to sustain intra-regional and international trade, enhanced catch documentation and traceability system of neritic tuna fish and fishery products should be promoted at national level in all ASEAN Member States (AMS).

10. In this connection, the representative from the ASEAN-USAID MARKET Project *Mr. Corey Peet* suggested that the AMS could consider implementing the Fisheries Improvement Protocol (FIP) to ensure that neritic tuna fish and fishery products traded from the region comply with the key environmental and social market requirements imposed by major importing countries. He added that global seafood buyers are now shifting their focus on suppliers who can assure that fish and fishery products in the market conform to environmentally and socially responsible practices, and are therefore calling for certified sources of seafood through fishery and aquaculture improvement projects, e.g. ASEAN FIP Project which could be developed in partnership with NGOs, e.g. Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) among others.

11. Nonetheless, the Experts Group Meeting also agreed to promote the implementation of the ASEAN Tuna Eco-labelling Initiative as part of the management of the region's neritic tuna fisheries. This is considering that requirements for eco-labelled products could become a trade barrier to the tuna industry since products without eco-labels might no longer be allowed to enter the global market. The ASEAN Tuna Eco-labelling Initiative aims to promote the market of tuna fish and fishery products from the region in the global market and ensure that tuna fisheries management systems in the ASEAN have been improved for sustainability of the resources in terms of production as well as in the aspects socio-economic considerations.

12. In addressing the issue of inadequate benefits for people involved in of neritic tuna fisheries it was noted that some countries in the ASEAN have not conducted socio-economic surveys of their respective fisheries industry. In this regard the Experts Group Meeting suggested that the AMSs could consider conducting socio-economic surveys to compile baseline information on the social status of the stakeholders involved in the neritic tuna industry. The information could be useful when the AMSs consider reinforcement of rights, privileges and responsibilities of fish workers and others involved in the fishing industry in accordance with national laws and regulations with the purpose of improving the welfare of people engaged in neritic tuna fisheries.

13. Since the status of neritic tuna stocks in the region could not be determined at present due to insufficient information on the production trend of neritic tunas while catch and effort data could not be standardized, the Experts Group Meeting recognized the difficulty in developing stock assessment models for neritic tunas. Nevertheless, the Experts Group Meeting suggested that at the start, AMSs could consider improving their capacity in establishing national status and trend of neritic tunas, as well as enhancing their capability in identifying the species of neritic tunas in their respective countries.

14. Furthermore, in order to address the issue on the need to conduct stock assessment of neritic tuna resources in the region, the Experts Group Meeting agreed to establish a regional

Neritic Tuna Scientific Working Group (SWG-Neritic Tuna), which will be tasked to work on the regional stock assessment of neritic tuna resources and provide scientific advice for policy considerations on neritic tuna management. As envisioned, the SWG-Neritic Tuna would initially work on integration of independent and statistical data on neritic tuna production in the AMS, while taking note of the possibility of conducting neritic tuna tagging experiments at the regional level as well as risk assessment studies on the impact of neritic tuna fisheries to the marine ecosystem.

15. On the social issues that confront the fisheries industry, the Experts Group Meeting suggested that lessons learned and experiences gained by many countries in the region with respect to the welfare of workers in the fisheries industry should be shared. Such information would be useful to reduce human trafficking and protect the rights of migrant workers in the region's fisheries industry.

16. Based on the abovementioned recommendations on the elements that would go into the RPOA-Neritic Tuna, the Experts Group Meeting supported/confirmed the five priority objectives that were identified during the October 2013 TCM. However, the Experts Group Meeting suggested a slight rearrangement of the sequence in which the objective was presented. Thus, the prioritized objectives should be in this order: **Objective 1**: improving data collection and development of key indicators; **Objective 2**: improving compliance to rules and regulations and access to markets; **Objective 3**: determining available data and information; **Objective 4**: improving sustainable interaction between fisheries and marine ecosystem; **Objective 5**: addressing social issues; and **Objective 5**: promoting regional cooperation.

VI. RECOMMENDED CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RPOA-NERITIC TUNA

17. During the Plenary Discussion, several capacity building activities were suggested to enable the AMSs to implement the RPOA-Neritic Tuna. While noting that capacity building is more than training as it encompasses not only human resource development but also institutional development based on appropriate policy and legal frameworks, the Experts Group Meeting suggested that capacity building in this aspect could include training sessions (for trainers, on-site, in SEAFDEC), meetings and consultations (on-site for stakeholders, in other sites for information exchange), workshops (regional planning, high-level, on-site for stakeholders), research and assessment studies, public awareness, and discussions on relevant management measures.

18. Moreover, the Experts Group Meeting also considered the fact that the needs of the beneficiaries and target clientele of the different activities could differ based on the level of their participation in the activity plan. Nonetheless, the Meeting agreed that the beneficiaries of the capacity building program could include the officers and members of fisheries associations; fisheries officers, managers and policy makers; local government units; statisticians, data enumerators and key informants; port inspectors, skippers, crew and master of fishing vessels; researchers, scientists and experts; private sector, NGOs and the academe; and the general public.

19. After the discussion, the Experts Group Meeting agreed on the draft Capacity Building Program to Support the Implementation on RPOA-Neritic Tuna as shown in **Annex 5**. Considering that prioritization of the activities should be made by the countries based on their requirements, the Meeting agreed that respective countries' priorities should be provided to

SEAFDEC through email to facilitate the finalization of the work plan for the implementation of the RPOA-Neritic Tuna.

20. At the initial stage, a draft Work Plan for the Development of RPOA-Neritic Tuna, Establishment of the Scientific Working Group, and Capacity Building Program was presented by the SEAFDEC Policy and Program Coordinator, *Dr. Somboon Siriraksophon*, as shown in **Annex 6**. While noting the urgency of the matter, the Experts Group Meeting suggested that the draft Work Plan should be discussed more thoroughly by the respective countries while suggestions should be provided to SEAFDEC as soon as possible for consolidation and finalization.

VII. ENDORSEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EXPERTS GROUP MEETING ON THE 1ST DRAFT OF RPOA-NERITIC TUNA

21. The Experts Group Meeting adopted the draft RPOA-Neritic Tuna (**Annex 4**) and Capacity Building Program to Support the Implementation of RPOA-Neritic Tuna (**Annex 5**) on 20 June 2014. The said draft will be circulated to the ASEAN Member States to obtain endorsement from their respective high officials, after which all comments and suggestions will be compiled by SEAFDEC. The final draft RPOA-Neritic Tuna with the accompanying Capacity Building Program will be submitted for endorsement through the appropriate ASEAN and SEAFDEC mechanisms.

VIII. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

22. The Meeting Chairperson, *Mr. Hajime Kawamura* thanked everyone for their active participation in the deliberations that contributed to the success of the Meeting, especially in attaining the objectives of the Meeting. After wishing the participants safe journey to their respective home countries, the Chairperson declared the Experts Group Meeting closed.

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Opening Remarks

By *Mr. Hajime Kawamura*,
SEAFDEC Deputy Secretary General

Distinguished delegates and Experts from the SEAFDEC Member Countries;
Representatives from the Embassy of Sweden in Thailand, and from other regional projects and initiatives;
My colleagues from SEAFDEC and Members of the Regional Fisheries Policy Network; Ladies and Gentlemen, a very good morning!

It is indeed a pleasure for me to be here with you at this very significant **Experts Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters**, organized by SEAFDEC through the SEAFDEC-Sweden Project. First of all, please allow me to convey the regrets of our SEAFDEC Secretary-General, Dr. Chumnarn Pongsri, for his inability to join this Experts Group Meeting due to an equally important commitment that he has to attend to. On behalf therefore of SEAFDEC, I would wish to express my sincerest thanks to everyone for sharing your time and giving your effort for this very important event.

As you must have noted, we could say that this Meeting is very significant and important because in the past four or five years, our statistics showed that production of neritic tuna has continued to decline in terms of volume. Considering that the region's total fish catch comprises large amount of neritic tuna, especially production from Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam, such picture is therefore, very alarming for the fishing industry. Thus, for the sustainability of the region's neritic tuna resources, SEAFDEC was tasked to address this urgent concern of declining neritic tuna catch for food security of the future generations. While embarking on this assigned task, SEAFDEC recognizes that in order to address this problem, there is a need to strengthen regional and sub-regional cooperation for the promotion of sustainable utilization of neritic tuna.

The task of developing a Regional Cooperation focusing on neritic tuna fisheries was given to SEAFDEC during the 45th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council last April 2013 in the Philippines. In responding to such instruction, SEAFDEC organized the Technical Consultation Meeting on Neritic Tuna in October 2013 under the framework and with support provided by the SEAFDEC-Sweden Project. As a result, the meeting agreed to develop the Regional Plan of Action or RPOA for sustainable neritic tuna fisheries and management, as well as identified the priority issues to be used for developing the said RPOA of which this year at the 46th Council Meeting, the Council supported our effort among Member Countries, SEAFDEC and other collaborating partners to continue the work on the said RPOA.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are gathered here in this beautiful hotel and very impressive Province of Krabi to discuss and revisit the current problems and challenges that confront the region's neritic tuna fisheries in the different sub-regional areas and fishing grounds, such as those in the of South China Sea, Gulf of Thailand, Sulu-Sulawesi Sea, and Andaman Sea. While we strive to achieve the objective of

drafting the RPOA, we also need to chart the indicative work program including capacity building for the Member Countries.

The response of the Member Countries with positive indications through your representations at this Meeting is a good sign that we can continue the work that we started in 2013. I would therefore encourage everyone to actively participate during the discussions, and openly share your knowledge and experience to achieve the expected outputs and the goal of this endeavor to ensure the sustainability of neritic tuna resources in our region.

Lastly, on behalf of the organizer, I would wish to thank you once again for coming to this Meeting. As I wish all of us the best in this undertaking, I also look forward to a very fruitful and successful Meeting. Without further ado, I now declare this Experts Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters, open.

Thank you and good day.

The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters,

18-20 June 2014, Krabi province, Thailand

Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters

SEAFDEC Secretariat

The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters, 18-20 June 2014, Krabi province, Thailand

BACKGROUND -1

- ◆ Tuna study was initiated by TD under FCG/ASSP program, funded by JTF during 2008-2012 in 5 major tuna countries,
- ◆ Focusing tuna exploitation within EEZ of Member Country,
- ◆ Overall tuna exploitation in the Southeast Asian waters was increased 2 folds from 2001 to 2006 (1.5million Mt).

The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters.

BACKGROUND -2

- ◆ At 45th Meeting of council, recognized the need to develop a PoA for Regional Cooperation focusing neritic tuna fisheries,
- ◆ In response, TCM on Neritic tuna was organized in Oct'13 under the SEAFDEC-Sweden framework,
- ◆ The Meeting identified the Prioritized issues to be used for developing RPOA & way forward

WAY FORWARD

Develop RPOA	Working Group	Capacity Building
1. Drafting of the Regional Plan of Action for Sustainable Neritic Tuna Fisheries	1. Establishing four working groups on SCS, Sulu-Sulawesi Sea, COT and Andaman sea	1. Develop capacity building/training program
2. Regional Technical Consultation to finalize the RPOA	2. Develop the Strategic Plan and TOR for WG	2. Develop SOP, tools and standardize data collection system
3. Country adoption	3. Country adoption	3. Conduct Regional Training Program
4. Awareness campaign	4. Funding support under cost shared policy	

The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters.

NERITIC TUNAS IN ASEAN REGION

Neritic Tuna Productions from 2004-2010

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Thailand	136,227	138,917	126,000	112,000	35,000	40,133	23,896
Indonesia	308,475	293,463	329,115	388,364	388,364	464,015	427,240
Malaysia	44,694	44,864	53,871	50,347	63,455	48,530	52,822
Philippines	252,829	251,334	253,353	264,251	216,568	203,607	280,734


The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters.

EXPLOITATION OF NERITIC TUNAS (2010)

Species Composition (2010)

- Eastern little: 51%
- Frigate tuna: 27%
- Longtail tuna: 20%
- Bullet tuna: 2%

The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters.




SCOPE & OBJECTIVES OF REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

5) Regional Cooperation:

- ❖ Sub-regional fisheries management for neritic tuna
- ❖ Assessment of the status and trends of neritic tuna at sub-regional level
- ❖ Enhancing intra-regional trade
- ❖ Sharing of data and information
- ❖ Cooperation with other regional/international organizations

The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters, 12



SCOPE & OBJECTIVES OF REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

1) Improving fisheries productivity:

- ❖ Open access and management of capacity
- ❖ Declining of neritic tuna or Sustainable fisheries
- ❖ Impact of Climate change
- ❖ Better understanding management of fisheries and habitats

The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters, 8




SCOPE & OBJECTIVES OF REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

2) Improving access to markets:

- ❖ IUU Fishing including transshipment of catch, double flagging, and poaching
- ❖ Infrastructure of fishing port/landing sites inadequate
- ❖ Post-harvest losses/quality
- ❖ Enhance intra-regional and international trade


The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters, 9



Expected Outputs

- ❖ A final draft Regional Plan of Action for Sustainable Fisheries of Neritic Tunas in the Southeast Asian Region
- ❖ Work Plan/Activity Plan for 2014 and 2015 including identified ASEAN-wide core expert/working group.
- ❖ In addition sub-regional task forces/working groups established with identified steps to further define sub-regional work plans in cooperation with sub-regional partners
- ❖ Capacity building program identified of relevance to the draft RPOA-Neritic Tuna and suggested Work Plans

The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters, 15



Expected Outcomes

- ❖ Increased commitment to collaboration and cooperation among Southeast Asian countries, regional and sub-regional organizations and initiatives in management of neritic tuna fisheries at all levels.
- ❖ Enhanced awareness on efforts needed to ensure and verify the sustainability of neritic tuna fisheries management including roles and responsibilities for all relevant stakeholders.

The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters, 16




SCOPE & OBJECTIVES OF REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

5) Regional Cooperation:

- ❖ Sub-regional fisheries management for neritic tuna
- ❖ Assessment of the status and trends of neritic tuna at sub-regional level
- ❖ Enhancing intra-regional trade
- ❖ Sharing of data and information
- ❖ Cooperation with other regional/international organizations

The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters, 12




SCOPE & OBJECTIVES OF REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

6) Social Issues:

- ❖ Unfair benefits allocation,
- ❖ Working conditions and labor issues


The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters. 13



Aims of the Meeting

- ❖ To develop the 1st draft Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tunas in the Southeast Asia waters finalized by the participating group of experts;
- ❖ To have an indicative work program defined for the coming years with established regional and sub-regional working groups, including sub-regional links with options for cooperation among institutions (with indicative budget estimates provided)
- ❖ To have capacity building programs for Member Countries identified together with suggested partners in defined sub-regions


The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters. 14



Expected Outputs

- ❖ A final draft Regional Plan of Action for Sustainable Fisheries of Neritic Tunas in the Southeast Asian Region
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- ❖ In addition sub-regional task forces/working groups established with identified steps to further define sub-regional work plans in cooperation with sub-regional partners
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The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters. 15



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The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters. 16

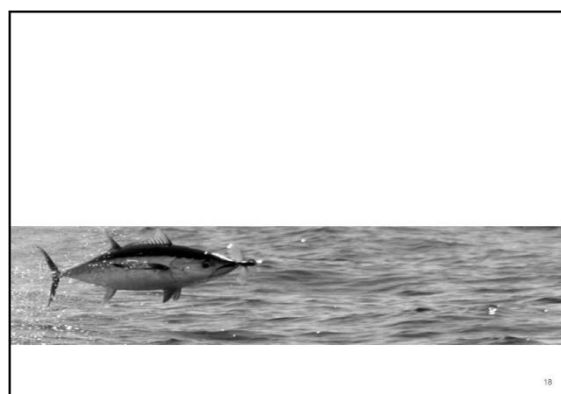


Agenda and Timetable

- Agenda 1: Opening Remarks
- Agenda 2: Introduction and Meeting Arrangements
- Agenda 3: Group discussion on drafting of RPOA-Neritic Tunas
- Agenda 4: Recommended capacity building program to support implement the RPOA-Neritic Tuna
- Agenda 5: Work plans for 2014 and 2015
- Agenda 6: Final draft agreement and recommendations from the expert meeting



The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters. 17



4th Draft (as of 19 June 14)

**Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of
Neritic Tuna in the ASEAN Region**

Objectives I: Determining available data and information, improving data collection and developing key indicators:

No.	Issues/Action plans	Remarks
1.	<i>Insufficient data/information</i>	
	Improve Data Collection and Analysis for Neritic Tuna	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compilation and review of existing data and information on neritic tunas from all related national agencies to understand the status, trend and biological parameters • Review and strengthening of data collection systems on neritic tuna • Review of policies, rules and regulations with regards to information collection and sharing • Implementation of collection system on catch data of neritic tunas based on the Regional Framework for Fishery Statistics of Southeast Asia • Regular updating of data based on independent fisheries surveys conducted by research institutions • Introduction of the use of logbook and observer/trainer onboard program, if not already in place • Capacity building for data enumerators, observers, port inspectors, scientists, or other key data informants on species identification and biological information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provision of reference materials to data collectors, e.g. colored pictures of fish, fish identification handbooks, mobile applications • Improvement of data/information for a common pool of tuna database 	
2.	<i>Undetermined neritic tuna stocks status</i>	
	Assess Neritic Tuna Stocks and Develop Resource Key Indicators	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination of the type of data required for stock assessment or key indicator analysis • Utilization of the existing SOPs for data collection to determine fisheries key indicators on status and trend of neritic tuna • Encouraging the conduct of research on neritic tuna at national level (e.g. stock assessment, biological, genetics, tagging program etc.) • Integration of independent fisheries data with routine data from statistics to improve the analysis of neritic tuna stock assessment at national level • Strengthening capacity building on stock assessment • Conduct and regular updating of national stock assessment of neritic tuna • Seeking technical cooperation with NGOs, RFMOs, relevant research institutions for the conduct of research on neritic tuna 	

Objectives II: Improving sustainable fisheries management

No.	Issues/Action plans	Remarks
1.	<i>Open access</i>	
	Promote Management of Fishing Capacity	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Control of fishing effort and capacity at national level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Determination of Total Allowable Catch (TAC) ○ Estimation of the economic valuations and/or biological success of TAC ○ Issuance of numbers of fishing licenses at optimal level ○ Development of operation strategy considering economic valuation 	

No.	Issues/Action plans	Remarks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration and licensing system of fishing vessels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mandatory registration of fishing vessels and licensing to operate based on national policies ○ Provision of authorized foreign fishing vessels conducting fishing operations in national waters of concerned countries based on bilateral agreement • Regulation on fishing gears <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Registration of fishing gear licenses or fishing permits based on national policies ○ Prohibition of active fishing gears (<i>e.g.</i> purse seine, ring net, Danish seine, trawls, etc.) within fishing zones for small-scale fisheries based on national policies ○ Regulation on mesh size of nets, where applicable depending on the type of gears and purposes of fishing • Application of selective fishing gears and/or practices 	
2.	<i>Inadequate management of neritic tuna resources in some areas</i>	
	Promote Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FADs management plan/scheme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regulation on the use of FADs (<i>i.e.</i> recording the types/numbers, mapping, and use of environment-friendly materials) ○ Development of FADs management plan at national level • Regulation on fishing areas and/or fishing seasons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implementation of closed season for neritic tunas, <i>i.e.</i> during spawning season and nursery grounds based on best available scientific information and recommendations ○ Establishment of fisheries management zoning areas ○ Provision of alternative livelihoods to small-scale fishers (during closed season, if relevant) • Protection of critical habitats and enhancement of fisheries resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Deployment of fish enhancing devices, artificial reefs or fish apartments relevant to neritic tuna ○ Establishment of fisheries <i>refugia</i> and/or fish sanctuaries 	-Define FADs (only man made, material used?? -Define <i>refugia</i>
3.	<i>Inadequate understanding of management and conservation measures</i>	
	Enhance Understanding of Management and Conservation Measures of Neritic Tuna	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancement of awareness of stakeholders on the importance of conservation and management measures • Conduct of comparative study of good practices learnt from other countries, RFMOs and international organizations • Arrangement of regular stakeholders' (including scientists, managers, policy makers, and fishers) consultations/meetings on management and conservation measures • Creation of platforms/fora to facilitate cooperation among scientists and managers • Development of information, education and communication (IEC) programs on sustainable use of resources 	
4.	<i>Negative impacts of climate change to changes of neritic tuna stocks</i>	
	Mitigate the Impacts of Climate Change on Neritic Tuna Stocks	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging the involvement of ASEAN Member States in regional/sub-regional research/study on the impact, adaptation, and mitigation measures of climate change on fisheries particularly on neritic tunas 	

Objectives III: Improving sustainable interaction between fisheries and marine ecosystem

No.	Issues/Action plans	Remarks
1.	<i>Negative impacts of fisheries to marine ecosystem</i>	
	Reduce Negative Impacts of Neritic Tuna Fisheries to Marine Ecosystem	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM) • Encouraging the conduct of risk assessment on the impacts of neritic tuna fisheries to marine ecosystem 	Define EAFM

No.	Issues/Action plans	Remarks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct of R&D on suitable fishing methods and practices for sustainable utilization of neritic tuna resources and promote to ASEAN Member States • Promotion of the use of responsible fishing technology and practices • Development and adaptation of effective management and conservation measures to minimize the catching of small neritic tuna by purse seine/ring nets • Establishment of fisheries <i>refugia</i> system to protect the juvenile and larval stages 	

Objectives IV: Improving compliance to rules and regulations and access to markets

No.	Issues/Action plans	Remarks
1.	<i>IUU fishing</i>	
	Combat IUU Fishing Occurring in Southeast Asian Region	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of respective National Plans of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing (NPOA-IUU Fishing) • Strengthen the implementation of NPOA-IUU Fishing (for countries with NPOA-IUU Fishing in place) • Promotion of cooperation among ASEAN Member States and with other RPOA-IUU participating countries in combating IUU fishing under the RPOA-IUU Framework • Strengthening coordination with the local governments, private sector and other agencies concerned to improve compliance on rules and regulations • Regulations on transshipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establishment of procedures on transshipment of catch • Establishment of national fisheries observer scheme for neritic tuna • Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implementation and/or strengthening of VMS program based on national policies • Double flagging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exchange of vessel information (upon request) among concerned ASEAN Member States • Poaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establishment of bilateral and multilateral networking to prevent poaching activities ○ Development of measures to regulate and deny access to landing of poached fish based on national legal framework • Strengthening of surveillance activities and enforcement • Prohibition of importation, landing or transshipment at port of neritic tuna from vessels presumed to have carried out IUU fishing activities in the ASEAN region without prior clarification from vessel owners or concerned flag states • Development of measures to refrain the conduct of business transaction with owners and vessels presumed to have carried out IUU fishing activities 	-Need to define activities classified as IUU fishing -define poaching
2.	<i>Inadequate infrastructures in fishing ports/landing sites</i>	
	Improve Infrastructures in Fishing Ports/Landing Sites	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of the development of infrastructures such as auction facilities, jetties, water supply systems, ice processing plants to be completely available in fishing ports and landing sites • Development of the ASEAN standard (minimum requirements) for the management of fishing ports and landing sites (including safety, hygiene and sanitation standards) 	
3.	<i>Post-harvest losses/product quality deterioration</i>	
	Improve Post-harvest Techniques and Product Quality	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of technical support to promote proper handling and preservation of neritic tuna onboard and at ports • Conduct of assessment of post-harvest losses of neritic tunas and describing the various ways of reducing post-harvest losses • Exchange of fishing and post-harvest technology or preservation techniques onboard as well as design/materials of fishing boats to reduce post-harvest losses 	
4.	<i>Limited support to intra-regional and international trade</i>	

No.	Issues/Action plans	Remarks
	Enhance Intra-regional and International Trade	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catch documentation and traceability system/scheme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development and implementation of traceability system to monitor movement of neritic tuna fish/products in the supply chain for export (<i>i.e.</i> origin of catch, transport, processing, storage and distribution) ○ Implementation of ASEAN Catch Documentation System/Scheme* by ASEAN Member States for neritic tuna fish and fishery products at national level ○ Encouraging the implementation of the Fisheries Improvement Project Protocol (FIPP), where applicable and application of eco-labeling scheme • Facilitation and strengthening of intra-regional and international trade at national level • Development of Harmonized System (HS) Code especially for neritic tuna (regional issue) 	-Put more info on FIPP *link with Obj. V

Objectives V: Social Issues

No.	Issues/Action plans	Remarks
1.	<i>Inadequate benefits for people involved in neritic tuna fisheries and industries</i>	
	Improve the Benefits for People Involved in Neritic Tuna Fisheries and Industries	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of socio-economic surveys (i.e. working condition of fishers, their income and the living standard) in local communities, large scale fisheries and ancillary industries to gather baseline information • Development of arrangements and partnership between fisheries authorities or related agencies and fisheries industries regarding implementation of labor standards in fisheries in accordance with national laws, the International Labor Organization (ILO) Work in Fishing Convention of 2007 (C188/Work in Fishing Convention, 2007) No. 188 and other related ILO Conventions • Reinforcement of rights, privileges and responsibilities of fish workers and others involved in fishing industry in accordance with national labor laws and regulations with the purpose of improving the welfare of people engaged in fisheries • Facilitating the cooperation between neighboring countries taking into account the importance of migrant labors 	
2.	<i>Working conditions and labor issues</i>	
	Improve Working Conditions of Labor	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of child labor under the age of 15 years (or less than 18 years) working in fisheries sectors in accordance with ILO Conventions • Recognizing security and safety issues for all types of fishing activities by implementing skills training program • Promotion of safety requirements at sea with capacity building and training for people engaged in fisheries and related activities 	

Objectives VI: Regional Cooperation

No.	Issues/Action plans	Remarks
1.	<i>Lack of Sub-regional action plans for neritic tuna fisheries</i>	
	Enhance/Develop Sub-regional Action Plans for Neritic Tuna Fisheries	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the existing action plans in sub-regions such as Sulu-Sulawesi, Gulf of Thailand, South China Sea, and Andaman Sea • Establishment of cooperation on R&D to support sub-regional management of neritic tuna fisheries • Exchanging of information among ASEAN Member States on legal framework, policies & management, trade rules & regulations at sub-regional and regional levels on neritic tuna fisheries • Encouraging the participation of ASEAN Member States in sub-regional fora and 	



No.	Issues/Action plans	Remarks
	consultations organized by regional fishery management organizations such as IOTC, if applicable and other regional for a	
2.	<i>Insufficient information on status and trends of neritic tuna at sub-regional level</i>	
	Assessment of the Status and Trends of Neritic Tuna at Sub-Regional Level	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of the SEAFDEC scientific working group on neritic tuna for regional stock assessment and providing scientific advice for policy considerations on neritic tuna management • Conduct of regular meetings of SEAFDEC scientific working group at a sub-regional and regional levels • Conduct of regional tagging program on neritic tuna 	
3.	<i>Limited support to intra-regional and international trade</i>	
	Enhancing Intra-regional and International Trade	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of joint trade promotions within and outside the region through the ASEAN Tuna Working Group • Promotion of bilateral/multilateral cooperation on trade of neritic tuna among ASEAN Member States • Promotion of the development of ASEAN Catch Documentation Systems/Schemes • Enhancement of the promotion of neritic tuna fish and fishery products from small-scale operators • Enforcement of compliance by private sectors on trade regulations 	

**Draft Capacity Building Program to Support the Implementation
of the RPOA-Neritic Tuna**


Capacity Building Needs	Type of Capacity Building	Beneficiaries/Target Clientele
Objective I: Determining available data and information, improving data collection and developing key indicators		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neritic tuna species identification and biological information 	Training (on-site)	data enumerators, observers, port inspectors, scientists, other key data informants, experts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building to collect neritic tuna data 	Training (on-site)	Port officers, enumerator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistics and data collection (including standardizing the stock assessment methodology and data collection) 	Workshop	Managers, researchers, statisticians
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess CPUE, stocks status to calculate based on catch data and fishing effort 	Workshop	Managers, researchers, scientists, experts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harmonize national statistics system among national agencies involved 	Training (on-site)	Fisheries officers, statisticians, managers
Objective II: Improving sustainable fisheries management		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of common understanding on RPOA Neritic Tuna 	Regional Planning Workshop	Managers, scientists, experts, NGOs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing and providing scientific information to improve regional fishery management system 	High level workshop	Policy makers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionalize the regional scientific working group on neritic tuna 	Meeting	Experts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compile list of experts on stock assessment 	Workshop	Experts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of regional stock assessment model for young scientist 	Training	Scientists, managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the concept of economic valuation and/or biological success of TAC 	Workshop	Managers, scientists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neritic tuna data collection 	Trainers Training (on-site)	Trainers, managers, experts, fisheries associations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exchange information on fishing registration, licensing, regulation and policy and work together to establish similar method for the region 	Workshop	Managers, policy makers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance skills in international water regulations and legal requirements to fish 	Training (on-site)	skippers, crew, master of vessels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve technical skills on fishing gear and methods 	Training	gear technologists, private sector, managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulation of fishing gear and methods and zoning (to harmonize fishing gear to be used) 	Training	Managers, policy makers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigating the impacts of climate change on neritic tuna fisheries 	Training	Scientists, managers, policy makers. NGOs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction, use and management of FADs 	Training (on-site)	Fisheries associations, fishing technologists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional assessment on the impact of FADs on the ecosystem 	Workshop	Experts, managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular stakeholders' forum (regional level) 	Workshop	Managers, experts, INGOs

Capacity Building Needs	Type of Capacity Building	Beneficiaries/Target Clientele
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular stakeholders' forum (national level) 	Workshop (on-site)	Managers, experts, fisheries associations, academe
Objective III: Improving sustainable interaction between fisheries and marine ecosystem		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ecosystem approach to fisheries management (EAFM) 	Trainers training	Managers, experts, policy makers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk assessment of the neritic tuna fisheries to marine ecosystem 	Training	Researchers, experts, policy makers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effects of fishing methods especially on by-catch 	Training	Fishing technologists, managers, experts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a suitable management measures for tropical fishery resources 	Workshop	Managers, experts, policy-makers
Objective IV: Improving compliance to rules and regulations and access to markets		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing of information on combating IUU fishing in the region (need annual evaluation), e.g. ASEAN Guidelines on Combating IUU Fishing, ASEAN Guidelines on Preventing the Entry of IUU Fish and Fishery Products into the Supply Chain (both guidelines still being finalized) 	Workshop	Experts, managers, policy makers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing of information on template of fishing license of each country 	Workshop	Managers, policy makers, regulatory officers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of implementation of NPOA-IUU fishing (including development of SOP on IUU fishing) 	Workshop (on-site)	Policy makers, managers, experts, fisheries associations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-harvest losses onboard vessels and new design of fishing vessel (understanding of post-harvest (good handling practices) preservation methods and value-added techniques, hygiene and sanitation) 	Training (on-site)	skippers, crew, master of vessels, fisheries associations, post-harvest technologists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of proper mechanism through focal points on research and development and clear policy regulation/direction 	Workshop	Researchers, managers, policy makers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of national observer program (to collect scientific data) 	Training (on-site)	Managers, enumerators, fisheries associations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement of skills on international fishing port standards 	Training	Port managers, policy makers, managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness building on IUU Fishing 	Consultation (on-site)	Public, fisheries associations, NGOs, academe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of catch documentation, certification and traceability 	Training	Researchers, managers, policy makers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International fish trade regulations and international food safety standards 	Workshop	Researchers, managers, policy makers, food technologists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fish preservation, processing, waste along the processing chain especially for small scale fisheries 	Training (on-site)	Fisheries associations, managers, fishers, processors, post-harvest technologists
Objective V: Social Issues		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase knowledge on labor requirements 	Consultation	Policy makers, managers, labor officers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review labor regulations of national and international agencies 	Workshop (on-site)	Relevant government officers, fisheries


Capacity Building Needs	Type of Capacity Building	Beneficiaries/Target Clientele
		associations, NGOs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up network on safety at sea to reduce accidents 	Training (on-site)	Fishing boat crew and officers, policy makers, managers, fisheries associations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of socio economic to identify the baseline information such as the income of fishers, welfare, benefits, etc. of the neritic tuna industry 	Consultation (on-site)	Socio-economists, managers, experts, fisheries associations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance understanding and implementation of international laws in association with labor such as International Labor Organization (ILO) Work in Fishing Convention of 2007 	Workshop	Experts, managers, policy makers, labor officers
Objective VI: Regional Cooperation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and exchange of information on trade rules and regulations among AMS 	Workshop	Policy makers, fishery officers, industry, economists
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of SEAFDEC Scientific Working Group for stock assessment 	Meeting/ Workshop	Scientists, researchers, experts

WORKPLAN FOR DEVELOPING THE RPOA-NERITIC TUNAS, ESTABLISHMENT OF WORKING GROUPS AND HRD PROGRAM



The Expert Group Meeting on Regional Plan of Action on Sustainable Utilization of Neritic Tuna Resources in the Southeast Asia Waters, 18-20 June 2014, Krabi province, Thailand



ACTIVITY 1: DEVELOPMENT OF THE RPOA-NERITIC TUNAS

SUB-ACTIVITIES	Time frame	Responsible agencies	Status (by July 14)
1) Advise from the Council on the needs to develop the RPOA-neritic tuna	April, 2013	SEAFDEC	In progress
2) Technical Expert Consultation Identify the key issues for drafting	Oct, 2013	All AMS and SEAFDEC	completed
3) Expert Meeting on Drafting the RPOA Neritic tuna	June, 2014	All AMS, SEAFDEC & Stakeholders	completed
4) Stakeholder consultations (Tuna congress, Scientific conference/PH, US-AID-MARKET, others)	July-Oct.14	SEAFDEC	In progress
5) Submission to SEAFDEC Council for comments and endorsement	Sept, 2014	SEAFDEC	In progress
6) Address at the 17 th FCG/ASSP for endorsement	Dec. 2014	SEAFDEC and Lead AMS	In progress
7) Endorsement by the 23 rd ASWGF	June, 2015	SEAFDEC and Lead AMS	In progress

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ACTIVITY 2: Establishment of Working Group on Stock Assessment

SUB-ACTIVITIES	Time frame	Responsible agencies	Status
1) Establishing Scientific Working Group (SWG) on Stock Assessment: Andaman Sea, SCS+GOT, Sulu-Sulawesi Sea Areas	Within Aug.-Sept. 2014	SEAFDEC in cooperation with AMS	In progress
2) Scientific WG Meeting(s)	Nov. 2014 Feb. 2015 June. 2015	SEAFDEC and SWG	On going
➤ Develop the Strategic Plan and TOR of the SWG and endorsement by AMS	By Feb. 2015	SWG and SEAFDEC,	On going
➤ Identify the issues on stock assessment at national and regional level	By May 2015	SWG, SEAFDEC & RFMOs, etc	On going
➤ Standardize data collection and models, develop the SOP, tools, etc	By Jul. 2015	SWG, SEAFDEC	On going
3) Scientific WG on Stock Assessment under the TOR	Nov. 2015	SWG, SEAFDEC	On going

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ACTIVITY 3: HRD Program (based on the Discussion)

HRD Activities	Time frame	Responsible agencies	Status
1) Compilation of the required HRD program from AMS	20 June 14	SEAFDEC	completed
2) Prioritized the HRD Program based on Country Inputs in line with SEAFDEC plan	June - July 2014	SEAFDEC and All AMS	completed
3) Drafting the guidelines on EAFM for Neritic Tuna	July-Oct.14	SEAFDEC, RFPNs, others	On going
4) Proposed activity at the 37 th PCM for scrutinize and endorsement	Dec 2014	SEAFDEC	In progress
5) Conduct the HRD program(s) based on the prioritized setup	Feb.-May. 2015	SEAFDEC SWG	On going
6) HRD on EAFM for Neritic Tuna	By Oct. 15	SEAFDEC, SWG, RFPNs	On going

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