



MEDIA INFO-KIT

THE TERMINAL MEETING OF THE JTF6 PROJECT: COMBATING IUU FISHING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA THROUGH APPLICATION OF CATCH CERTIFICATION FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS

1. During the past decade, attempts had been made to improve fisheries management with the fundamental objective of reducing illegal and destructive fishing. The global value of IUU fishing is estimated at US\$22 billion (RM90.4 billion) per year. Up to 26 million tonnes of fish are caught illegally each year, conservatively estimated at between 10 to 20 per cent of global catch.
2. IUU fishing is also rampant in Malaysian waters. According to the Department of Fisheries Malaysia up to RM6 billion was lost to illegal fishing every year. Despite tough enforcement measures in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, IUU fishing remains rampant because the return on investment is lucrative and also because the vast area makes policing extremely difficult without cooperation from the member states.
3. The seriousness of this concern has been increasingly expressed through discussions and recommendations in various meetings and consultations such as those of the Meeting of the Council of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), the ASEAN Fisheries Consultative Forum (AFCF), SEAFDEC Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) on Fisheries Management in Southeast Asia, Regional Plan of Action to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices including Combating IUU Fishing in Southeast Asia (RPOA-IUU), as well as meetings of the ASEAN Heads of States including during the launching of the roadmap for ASEAN Economic Community.

4. On the part of SEAFDEC, collaborative projects under the Fisheries Consultative Working Group of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (FCG/ASSP) mechanism paved the way for the conduct of consultations and discussions at the regional and sub-regional levels to find the ways and means of promoting effective fisheries management as well as managing fishing capacity in order to combat IUU fishing in the Southeast Asian region.
5. The ASEAN Member States (AMSs) had requested SEAFDEC to assist them in the development of guidelines to prevent the entry of fish and fishery products from IUU fishing activities into the supply chain of the inter- and intra-regional as well as international fishery trade system.
6. SEAFDEC Marine Fishery Research Development and Management Department (MFRDMD) together with the SEAFDEC Secretariat conducted a series of consultative meetings involving the ASEAN-SEAFDEC member countries as well as experts from national and regional organizations, to identify the issues related to IUU fishing activities that occur in the Southeast Asian waters.
7. Through such meetings and consultations, the Guidelines were developed, reviewed and finalized for endorsement through processes under the ASEAN protocol. After incorporating the suggestions made during the 17th Meeting of FCG/ASSP in December 2014 and 47th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council in April 2015, the final draft of the Guidelines was endorsed by the 23rd Meeting of the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGF_i) in June 2015 for consideration at high level meetings of the ASEAN 2015.
8. Finally, the Guidelines were endorsed by the 37th Senior Officials Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (SOM-AMAF) in September 2015. The “ASEAN Guidelines for Preventing the Entry of Fish and Fishery Products from IUU Fishing Activities into the Supply Chain” was published in March 2016 (SEAFDEC/MFRDMD, 2016).
9. Other initiatives to combat IUU fishing in the Southeast Asian Region include 1) Establishment of the Regional Fishing Vessels Record (RFVR); 2) Development of the ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme (eACDS); 3) Establishing the Regional Cooperation on PSM; and 5) Developing the RPOA-Capacity and Bilateral and multilateral dialogue in the region.

10. The Council Directors of SEAFDEC, on the occasion of the Special Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council in Bangkok, Thailand on 15 November 2017, organized in conjunction with the 50th Anniversary of SEAFDEC, agreed to empowering SEAFDEC to strengthen its roles in the region and to improve its services to Member Countries by 1) Strengthening SEAFDEC's capacity to support the ASEAN's efforts to adopt and implement regional policies and guidelines, as well as ASEAN's efforts to monitor the implementation of such regional policies and guidelines; enhancing the human resource capability of the Member Countries to support, adopt and nationalize regional policies and guidelines; 2) Expanding the network with prominent organizations in relevant fields and engaging actively in international fisheries fora; 3) Enhancing human resources within the SEAFDEC organization and pooling expertise in the region to improve the performance of SEAFDEC; and 4) Promoting SEAFDEC to wider international communities to gain more support from organizations, governments and donors.

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