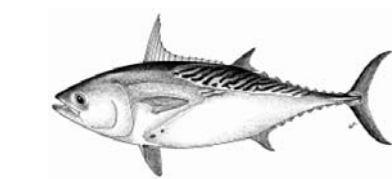
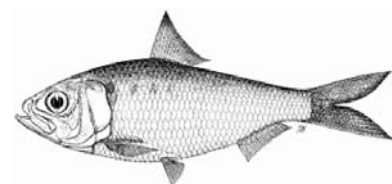


# ASIA-PACIFIC FISHERY COMMISSION

## Report of the Thirtieth Session



**Report of the Thirtieth Session of the**

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**ASIA-PACIFIC FISHERY COMMISSION (APFIC)**

**Manado, North Sulawesi, Indonesia, 11–13 August 2008**

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### ***ABSTRACT***

This is the final report of the Thirtieth Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC), held in Manado, North Sulawesi, Indonesia from 11 to 13 August 2008. Major topics discussed were: the overview of the status and potential of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific; APFIC's strategy and promotion of regional initiatives for more effective fisheries management; regional themes: certification in fisheries and aquaculture and capacity management and combating IUU fishing; policy, emerging issues and implementation of CCRF and the APFIC work in the next biennium (2009–2010).

### **Distribution:**

Participants in the Session  
Members of the Commission  
Other interested nations and international organizations  
FAO Fisheries Department  
Fishery Officers in FAO Regional Offices

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## OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) held its thirtieth session from 11 to 13 August 2008, in Manado, North Sulawesi, Indonesia. The session was attended by 33 participants comprising the representatives of 15 member countries of the Commission and observers from the Bay of Bengal Program Inter-Governmental Organization (BOBP-IGO), Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), the Swedish Board of Fisheries (SBF), the APFIC secretariat and officers of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). A list of the delegates and observers is appended as Appendix B.

2. At the official opening of the session, the chairperson of APFIC, Professor Widi Agoes Pratikto, Secretary-General, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesia, welcomed His Excellency the Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia, the Governor of North Sulawesi, APFIC and all participants.

3. The chairperson noted that since the twenty-ninth session of APFIC held in Malaysia in August 2006, a number of activities had been accomplished by APFIC. In particular, the chairperson mentioned the very successful second APFIC regional consultative forum meeting (RCFM) held in Manado, Indonesia from 6 to 9 August 2008. Several issues were raised during the second RCFM such as fishery management, fishing capacity reduction, product certification and combating IUU fishing. APFIC member countries had also informed the RCFM about various success stories from the APFIC region. Many of these had been supported by FAO in general and APFIC in particular. The chairperson expressed his sincere hope that APFIC would continue to assist its member countries to continue these success stories and support the development of the fisheries sector. The text of his welcome remarks is appended in Appendix D.

4. The welcome address to APFIC was made by Mr Ndiaga Gueye on behalf of Mr Ichiro Nomura, Assistant Director-General, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Mr Gueye expressed his gratitude to the Government of Indonesia and to His Excellency Mr Freddy Numberi, Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesia for hosting the thirtieth session of APFIC. Mr Gueye thanked the hosts for the excellent hospitality and asked them to convey to the Government of Indonesia, FAO's gratitude for the excellent arrangements and for hosting the thirtieth Session of APFIC in the beautiful city of Manado.

5. Mr Gueye stated that fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific region is of great importance to millions of people, particularly because it makes a major contribution to their food security. It was noted that APFIC has a very important task during the thirtieth session, namely to consider the recommendations of the second APFIC RCFM and to deliberate, comment on and endorse the major themes for APFIC's forthcoming biennium of work. He reaffirmed FAO's commitment to APFIC and noted that APFIC was proving to be a significant policy forum for fisheries in Asia and the Pacific region. The text of his welcome remarks is appended in Appendix F.

6. The opening speech to the thirtieth session was made by His Excellency Mr Freddy Numberi, Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia, who, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, extended a warm welcome to all participants.

7. The minister noted that the Government of the Republic of Indonesia has a long history of cooperation with FAO as part of its commitment to support any effort to eradicate hunger and ensure food security and good nutrition through the practice of agriculture, fisheries and forestry. The Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia and APFIC have always worked closely together in concerted efforts to promote the sustainable and responsible utilization of fisheries, aquaculture and related aquatic resources in Asia and the Pacific region. As an example, it was noted that the Republic of Indonesia, along with Australia, has initiated a regional plan of action (RPOA) to promote responsible fisheries practices including combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing practices. The RPOA is the first regional plan of its kind in the world and is a response to the call for states to take cooperative measures to implement the FAO International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IPOA-IUU).

8. The minister noted that the global phenomenon of climate change demands our undivided attention as it poses a significant threat to the agricultural, forestry and fisheries commodities and production systems and to food security in Asia and the Pacific region.

9. Finally, the minister reminded the participants not to forget that the aim of the APFIC is to eradicate hunger and ensure food security and good nutrition through sustainable and responsible utilization of natural marine and fishery resources. The full statement is appended as Appendix E.

## **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

10. APFIC adopted the agenda shown in Appendix A and agreed on the arrangements for the thirtieth session. The documents considered and reviewed by APFIC are listed in Appendix C.

## **ACTIVITIES OF APFIC SINCE THE TWENTY-NINTH SESSION**

11. The APFIC secretary introduced document APFIC/08/2 and document APFIC/08/2 addendum 1, summarizing the main events and activities undertaken by APFIC and the secretariat since the twenty-ninth session of APFIC, which was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 21 to 23 August 2006.

### **Report of the executive committee**

12. The secretary reported on the activities of the APFIC Executive Committee and the report of the seventy-first session of the Executive Committee (APFIC/08/Inf.4), which was convened in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 20 to 22 August 2007. He drew APFIC's attention to the recommendations of the session, as they related to its work and governance.

### **APFIC regional consultative workshops**

13. On the basis of the recommendations from the twenty-ninth APFIC session, the APFIC secretariat together with its member countries organized and hosted two regional consultative workshops. These were:

- the APFIC regional workshop on "Fishing capacity management and IUU fishing", hosted by the Government of Thailand and held in Phuket from 13 to 15 June 2007.

This was attended by 43 participants from APFIC member countries and regional organizations;

- the APFIC regional consultative workshop on “Certification schemes for capture fisheries and aquaculture”, hosted by the Government of Viet Nam and held in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam from 18 to 20 September 2007. This was attended by 49 participants from 13 APFIC member countries and a number of representatives from regional intergovernmental organizations.

14. It was reported that APFIC had just completed the second APFIC RCFM in Manado, Indonesia, from 6 to 9 August 2008. The APFIC secretariat organized the programme and participation with assistance from the Government of Indonesia, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries.

### **Collaboration with other international/regional bodies and projects**

15. The APFIC secretariat is actively working together with regional and international organizations and projects including:

- ASEAN Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGF<sub>i</sub>)
- Bay of Bengal Program Inter-Governmental Organization (BOBP-IGO)
- Mekong River Commission (MRC)
- Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA)
- Project for the Environmental Management of the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA)
- Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)
- Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC)
- The WorldFish Center
- International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF)
- Coordinating Body for the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA)

A full list of activities is given in APFIC/08/2 Addendum 1.

### **Direct assistance and advice to member countries**

16. APFIC has also provided direct advice to members. This has included:

- participation at two senior officers meetings and the ministerial meeting for the development of the regional plan of action (RPOA) to promote responsible fishing practices (including combating IUU fishing) in the region;
- provision of technical inputs and advice at a workshop to consider the risks and benefits of introducing *Penaeus vannamei* into India.

17. The APFIC secretary has also been backstopping projects addressing national and regional level fisheries and aquaculture development issues in the region. A full listing can be found in document APFIC/08/2 Addendum 1.

### **APFIC publications and internet-based information dissemination**

18. The secretariat continues to maintain the APFIC Web site (<http://www.apfic.org>), which has proved to be an excellent medium for providing information to APFIC Members and linking



them to APFIC publications and fisheries news. The Web site is also a portal for all forms of relevant fishery information, targeting the needs of fisheries professionals in the APFIC region.

19. The APFIC secretariat produced 14 publications in 2006–2008 (APFIC/08/2 Addendum 1). These included:

- reports of APFIC meetings (APFIC seventy-first Executive Committee meeting; APFIC twenty-ninth session meeting);
- reports on the two APFIC regional consultative workshops on managing fishing capacity and IUU fishing in the Asian region and certification schemes for capture fisheries and aquaculture;
- a report titled *Status and potential of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific 2006*;
- various technical reviews: *The history of industrial fishing in Southeast Asia*; *Fisheries policy content and direction in Asian APFIC member countries*; *Integrating fisheries into the development discourse*; *Fishing capacity management and IUU fishing in Asia*; *A short history of industrial fishing in the Pacific Islands*; *Potential costs and benefits of fisheries certification for countries in the Asia-Pacific region*; *A qualitative assessment of standards and certification schemes applicable to aquaculture in the Asia-Pacific region*;
- an overview of the impact of the tsunami on selected coastal fisheries resources in Sri Lanka and Indonesia; and
- APFIC regional consultative forum meeting report *Reforming fisheries and aquaculture in Asia-Pacific*.

### **Project proposals under development in support of the work and objectives of the commission**

20. Two significant projects are being developed by the FAO Regional Office in Bangkok, which also concurrently acts as the secretariat for APFIC. These two projects are:

- the Spanish-funded Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Programme, which will operate in six target countries (Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam), with a regional coordination and policy component. The outputs of the project will also contribute to guiding FAO's and APFIC's regional work on advising member countries in the region on developing policies related to sustainable fishery livelihoods;
- the APFIC secretariat has been actively supporting the development of the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem project. The project has been endorsed by the eight Bay of Bengal countries (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Maldives, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand). Co-financing has been successfully sought and the project proposal approved by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in 2005, and later endorsed by the GEF secretariat in July 2008.

### **Other activities of APFIC**

21. The Commission was informed of the activities of the interim secretary, Simon Funge-Smith and his appointment as secretary of APFIC in December 2007.

## **Responses by APFIC and observers**

22. The Commission endorsed the report of the seventy-first APFIC Executive Committee and expressed its appreciation of the work undertaken during the current biennium.

23. The secretary expressed sympathy to the people of Myanmar following Cyclone Nargis. As part of the UN flash appeal to support the Government of Myanmar and the people in the affected areas, FAO is developing immediate projects based on initial rehabilitation and is seeking funding for more comprehensive longer-term rehabilitation projects. The APFIC secretariat is following this up and assisting in the development of these projects. On the issue of early warning in remote and small-scale fishing communities, the secretariat reported that most coastal or remote fishing communities still lack an effective communication system. This is perhaps a lesson of the Asian tsunami that has not been taken up yet and therefore coastal communities remain vulnerable to such natural disasters.

24. The Commission agreed that non-participation by member countries at the APFIC sessions could constrain the effective functioning of the Commission and undermine the efforts of those countries participating. The Commission requested that all Members participate in the regular sessions of the Commission to ensure a quorum. To this effect, the Commission requested the APFIC chairperson to write to those member countries which had not participated in the last three sessions of APFIC to enquire whether these countries wished to continue their membership of the Commission.

25. Nepal noted its appreciation of recent support from the APFIC secretariat in developing a review of aquaculture potential for the country. This assistance was backed up with FAO support to improving carp genetics.

26. The secretary thanked the Members for their appreciation of APFIC's activities and confirmed that both APFIC and FAO would look for ways to answer the various requests of the Members.

## **OVERVIEW: STATUS AND POTENTIAL OF FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

27. The Commission considered the agenda item based on document APFIC/08/3, which is a summary of the draft *Status and potential of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific 2008* (APFIC/08/Inf.5). The final document is being prepared and will be finalized following the thirtieth session.

28. There is only limited information available on employment in fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific region. However, FAO's "The State of Fisheries and Aquaculture" (FAO Rome, 2006) estimated that Asia accounted for 87 percent of the total global number of persons engaged in fisheries and aquaculture production (total 41.4 million). Fisheries and aquaculture contribute significantly to the gross domestic product (GDP) of many countries in the region. Its importance is even greater if the contribution to poverty reduction and food security is considered. In terms of food security, revenue generation and employment, both the capture fisheries and aquaculture sectors continue to be of fundamental importance to Asia and the Pacific region as can be seen by the tonnage and value produced. However, there is a need to

address gaps and lack of data and information available on the socio-economic importance of fisheries and aquaculture.

29. There is still a considerable capture production that is not identified to the species level but is instead recorded as marine/freshwater fishes nei (nei = not elsewhere included), marine/freshwater molluscs nei and marine/freshwater crustaceans nei. The quantity reported under these categories has for some subregions been increasing significantly in recent years, indicating that the quality of the statistics is not improving.

30. The total catch in the tropical areas of Asia and the Pacific region is currently 23.1 million tonnes and the rising and declining trends seen in the temperate areas are less obvious in tropical waters. In tropical waters, coastal stocks (typically the demersal and small pelagic species) may be more diverse and perhaps more resilient in the face of heavy fishing pressure (in terms of biomass) than in temperate waters. However, it is important to note that a relatively large proportion of the catch from tropical waters is reported as marine fish nei (almost 30 percent). It is suggested that the uncertainty created by the 30 percent of catch reported as marine fish nei, could to some extent be resolved by targeted sample surveys in those countries reporting high quantities of fish in this category. This would at least give an indication of the percentage composition and value of the species caught. For Southeast Asia, the main species groups are pelagic marine fish and marine fish nei. In particular, the marine fish nei group keeps growing strongly (plus 10 percent) and is a major driving force of the overall production.

31. Finfish requiring lower inputs such as tilapia, carps, and barbs, pacu and pirapatinga, freshwater fish nei, milkfish and mullet all have been important food fish for developing states in Asia and the Pacific region. Many of these species are grown and cultured in “backyard ponds” and are in many cases not captured in official statistics. The large numbers of these ponds and the aggregated production and value to the households engaging in the activity are probably very significant. The lack of reliable information from this part of the sector currently limits evaluation of the grassroots impact of rural aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific region.

32. Although a large number of crustacean species is cultured, the predominant commercial species are brackishwater shrimps, freshwater prawns and freshwater/brackish water crabs. Two major species accounted for over 60 percent of the total crustacean production in 2006 (the whiteleg shrimp, *Penaeus vannamei* and the giant tiger shrimp, *Penaeus monodon*). The trend in shifting production away from *P. monodon* to whiteleg shrimp (*P. vannamei*) is quite clear now and has been reported in previous APFIC publications. The massive increase in the volume of whiteleg shrimp production coupled with the similar size ranges produced by all countries has led to severely depressed prices for whiteleg shrimp, a situation that producers are attempting to overcome through greater intensification. This echoes the trend in the early 1990s and although systems have been improved with the use of limited water exchange and specific pathogen free (SPF) stock, there are still aggregated environmental impacts at the system level as a result of the total loadings. *P. monodon* prices remain very high because of a lack of supply, however, until SPF broodstock can be produced, the disease risks for intensive systems remains too high for farmers. It can be anticipated that there will be a significant shift back to *P. monodon* once a reliable and commercially available supply of SPF stock can be accessed in the region.

33. The regional trends in aquaculture are as follows: South Asia’s production has tripled in the last 15 years, from 1.4 million tonnes in 1991 to 4.2 million tonnes in 2006; aquaculture production in Southeast Asia is much more diversified and in 2006 the production of eighty-three

different species was reported; the number of cultured species and the details reported have increased rapidly in the last five years; growth in Chinese inland culture has continued, mainly from the increased production of finfish culture, which has increased by an average of 9.2 percent since 2004; aquatic plants continue to be the predominant form of aquaculture in other regions of Asia, particularly in East Asian states, and account for 54 percent of the total production; aquaculture production from Oceania is relatively limited with molluscs and diadromous fish being the main cultured groups.

34. The trend of a reducing size of catch towards smaller and less valuable species when the larger more valuable species are fished out is sometimes referred to as “fishing down the food chain”. Splitting the reported data into the two distinct regions — temperate and tropical — allows a degree of analysis as to the changes in composition of reported catches and some trends in the fisheries.

35. The catches of sharks show remarkable differences between the tropical and temperate seas of Asia and the Pacific region. Temperate waters show a steady decline and tropical catches, in contrast, displayed a steady increase until 2003, after which they fell drastically (2003 to 2005). The reason for this is unclear.

36. The most valuable and largest tonnage part of the pelagic catch is the catch of tuna species. It is clear that tuna catches in temperate waters have declined steadily since 1965 in Asia and the Pacific region. The main reason is declining catches of bluefin, bigeye and yellowfin tuna in temperate waters. In contrast, the tropical tuna fisheries have increased production over the same period (perhaps reflecting this shift in effort from temperate to tropical waters), and yellowfin catches are still good, although declining. The bulk of the catch in both regions is made up today of skipjack and, to a smaller degree, albacore tuna in the temperate waters. Skipjack tuna is considered to be rather resilient in the face of fishing pressure and is a faster recruiting species. Nevertheless, there are even questions raised about the status of this species in some fisheries.

37. South Asia now has the largest share of inland capture production among subregions in Asia and the Pacific region and is approaching the values of Chinese inland production. The bulk of this production (75 percent) is freshwater fish from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan.

38. Chinese total production in 2006 was 18.0 million tonnes, almost back to the 18.3 million tonnes reported in 1998. However, as the People’s Republic of China (hereafter China) has since revised its figures for 2006 and is expected to revise data back to 1996, these trends are likely to be adjusted in the coming years.

39. Asia and the Pacific region produced 46.3 million tonnes of aquaculture which is 90 percent of global aquaculture production (total aquaculture production less aquatic plants). The growth of aquaculture production in the region has continued to be very strong, reflecting the trend for the last 15 years. This results mainly from continuously increasing production from China. There has been little change in the top twenty cultured species in the region between 1990 and 2006 (excluding aquatic plants and molluscs).

40. There is significant volume of aquaculture production reported by large group of species, e.g. not identified at family, order or species level. Consequently, the species items totals could have underestimated the real production of the individual species. The top species are all inland waters species, which are dominated by Chinese and Indian carps. It is worth noting that the number of carnivorous species has increased during the past 15 years.

41. Attention was drawn to the tables containing the status of APFIC member countries' accession to various international and regional agreements.

42. The Commissioners were requested to comment on the report, *Status and potential for fisheries and aquaculture 2008* and to reflect on the suggestions and recommendations for improved reporting contained in the report. Where possible, the Members were requested to provide clarifications on the information contained in the report.

### **Responses by the commission and observers**

43. The Commission thanked the secretariat for producing the APFIC overview *Status and potential of fisheries and aquaculture in the region 2008* and underlined that fishery statistics are of absolutely fundamental importance for good fisheries management. Effective monitoring of catch landings and port state measures were mentioned as important tools for the monitoring and management of fisheries.

44. It was suggested that the APFIC secretariat should contact member countries for updates on statistics and policy developments. The possibility of using a Web-based system for update was also suggested.

45. The Commission requested the secretariat for guidance on what proportion of nei in reporting would be acceptable. It was noted that the global average of reported nei is around 11 percent of total catch. It was also noted that the trend in reporting nei was increasing in the APFIC region and that this was of concern.

46. Noting that several Members have made great efforts to improve their reporting, but also noting that there are still significant areas where there could be improvement, the Commission **recommended** that APFIC member countries:

- provide statistics that also include catch effort and vessel numbers;
- undertake some targeted surveys to assess the composition of their nei reports to obtain better estimates — these can be communicated to APFIC or used to improve reports to FAO;
- improve estimates of the production from backyard systems in order to identify their contribution;
- provide improved disaggregated reports of the production in aquaculture, as a large part of the total production is reported at group level — this limits further analysis of the trends at species level which is needed because of the high degrees of variation in value and in the technical aspects of systems; and
- improve disaggregation of the catch of freshwater fish nei, as this makes up the bulk of total inland catch in several countries.

47. The Commission noted that marine protected areas (MPAs) are often created by departments other than the department responsible for fisheries and aquaculture. Usually the line ministry for MPAs are the environmental ministries. The Commission noted that constructive dialogue between fisheries and environmental agencies is crucial in order to ensure that the social and environmental benefits of MPAs are appropriately realized.

48. The Commission was informed that there are good examples of MPAs that have multiple usage areas and are not “closed parks”. These good examples should form the basis for discussions on MPAs. It was noted that this would be part of one of the emerging issues in APFIC’s work plan for 2008–2010. The secretariat was requested that in the preparations for this, work on suitable indicators for the environmental and livelihoods benefits and performance of MPAs should be identified. These would assist fisheries agencies in their dialogue with other stakeholders.

49. In consideration of the issue of shark fishing, Indonesia noted that some APFIC Members, including Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand have developed NPOA for shark management. The recorded increasing catch of shark in tropical areas and reducing catch in temperate zones requires action to strengthen shark data collection. In addition, greater public awareness is needed as the issue of shark finning and lack of retained catch in the region is one possible explanation for the declining shark catch figures.

50. The SEAFDEC representatives thanked APFIC for inviting them as observers to this important session. It was noted that SEAFDEC has developed an initiative on the regional framework for fisheries statistics of Southeast Asia. The initiative would also respond to the concern about reporting catch by detailed species for fisheries management. In addition, SEAFDEC in collaboration with the member countries conducted a regional study on shark in Southeast Asia, which includes information on catch utilization and a market study of shark fin. These findings could be shared with APFIC Members.

51. BOBP-IGO representatives expressed their thanks for the invitation to attend the thirtieth session as observers. The issue of MPAs is also important for the four Members of the BOBP-IGO. An initiative on shark fishing has been started by BOBP-IGO and it was suggested that BOBP-IGO could share the findings of these studies with APFIC Members.

## **APFIC’S STRATEGY AND PROMOTION OF REGIONAL INITIATIVES FOR MORE EFFECTIVE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT**

52. The secretariat introduced documents APFIC/08/4 and APFIC/08/Inf.6 on APFIC’s strategic plan for 2008–2012. The strategic plan provides a long-term vision as to how the Commission should work, bearing in mind its staff and funding limitations and Member States’ priorities.

53. The APFIC strategic plan was presented to the seventy-first APFIC Executive Committee for its consideration. The committee concluded that APFIC should continue its role as a regional consultative forum and further **recommended** it should facilitate coordination between regional organizations related to fisheries and aquaculture.

### **Regional consultative forum**

54. Under its mandate and the functions endorsed by its membership, APFIC is charged with meeting the information needs relating to fisheries and aquaculture in its member countries and its specific geographic area of competence. APFIC interprets this as acting as a regional consultative forum through which it is able to convene member countries and competent regional fisheries and aquaculture organizations to identify emerging issues in the fisheries sector and to elaborate and prioritize actions needed to address them.

## **Facilitating regional agreements and arrangements**

55. APFIC has a clear mandate to support and encourage the emergence of bilateral, trilateral and other arrangements for the effective management of fisheries among its member countries, and particularly within its geographical area of competence. It is therefore suggested that APFIC's strategy should be to promote regional arrangements and work with regional processes aimed at improving responsible fisheries in the region.

56. There are currently several developments ongoing in the region to which APFIC is committed to providing support/facilitation to its relevant Members. APFIC foresees that these regional initiatives will benefit from APFIC support in the areas in which it is specifically competent. These include:

- the development of the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem project, which has the objective of developing a strategic action plan for more effective fisheries and environmental cooperation in the Bay of Bengal;
- the development of the Regional Scientific Advisory Committee for Fisheries Management in Southeast Asia for which APFIC has been requested to play a collaborating role with SEAFDEC. There is also an ASEAN/SEAFDEC agreement to move towards long-term establishment of a regional fisheries management mechanism.

57. Although APFIC is competent to act on matters of common interest within the national waters of all its member countries, it does have some specific waters which are considered its main area of competence, such as the South China Sea. APFIC has thus a strategic interest in facilitating the development of regional arrangements for these geographical areas.

## **Promoting regional dialogue**

58. APFIC is in a position to initiate regular coordination meetings (telephone hook-up and/or conferencing) between regional fishery bodies (RFBs) and regional organizations, e.g. BOBP-IGO, APFIC, WorldFish Center, Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia and Pacific (NACA), SEAFDEC, Coordinating Body for the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA), MRC, Mangroves For the Future (MFF) initiative, ASEAN Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGFi), Bay of Bengal Initiative for MultiSectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation Fisheries Working Group (BIMSTEC FiWG). These link-ups would exchange information on projects, workshops and initiatives much in the same way as the Consortium to Restore Shattered Livelihoods in Tsunami-Devastated Nations (CONSRN) mechanism. The outcomes of this activity would be recorded and circulated to the regional organizations and could be communicated to APFIC focal points.

## **Capacity building**

59. APFIC has a capacity building function. It can assist in identifying technical assistance and the capacity-building needs of its Members. APFIC has already organized a regional training workshop on port state measures. APFIC also assisted in the initial workshops for the development of FAO guidelines on aquaculture certification to try and ensure that these are regionally relevant and corresponded to the needs to an aquaculture sector that had a large proportion of small-scale producers. FAO has recently approved a regional Technical Cooperation Programme project for improved aquafeed to reduce trash feed use in aquaculture in collaboration with NACA, as requested at the twenty-ninth session of APFIC.

60. The financing for technical assistance is highly dependent on the identification of extra-budgetary funding, as APFIC's core budget is limited. It covers enough to hold the RCFM and the Commission's sessions, i.e. Executive Committee's session and Commission's main session. APFIC therefore seeks donor funding and ad hoc contributions from member countries to carry out its regional consultative workshops and capacity building functions.

61. Members were invited to comment on the 2008–2012 proposed strategy for promoting regional management initiatives as well as to propose significant regional actions which could be promoted by the APFIC Members and other organizations to address these issues. The Commission was further invited to provide useful advice to the secretariat on better resourcing to the Commission.

### **Responses by the commission and observers**

62. Delegates and observers discussed the need to involve non-fisheries agencies that deal with broader issues that affect fisheries and fisherfolk, such as the environment and social affairs. Several Members commented that it is up to the Members themselves to coordinate with relevant agencies in their member countries and bring a consolidated position to APFIC. However, it is recognized that there is benefit in having broader participation in RCFM, particularly in the current biennium, as the two key themes proposed by APFIC, the ecosystem approach and sustainable livelihoods are issues where departmental coordination is highly relevant.

63. It was **recommended** that the APFIC secretariat and the host country of the next RCFM communicate closely on how environmental agencies could be made more aware of fisheries issues and their possible inclusion in the next RCFM as part of the ecosystem theme.

64. SEAFDEC described their work on harmonizing their regional statistics collection with FAO. They offered to cooperate with any initiative of APFIC and FAO in this area. The secretariat expressed its appreciation of the support of SEAFDEC and looked forward to further collaboration.

65. One Member raised the issue of the effect of subsidies and the removal of subsidies onto the small-scale sector. The secretariat will keep monitoring developments and bring to the attention of the Commission any activity undertaken by FAO on this matter.

66. The secretariat acknowledged the contribution of Sweden to the activities of the Commission and appreciated that this support allowed APFIC to undertake broader consultations on issues of regional importance.

67. It was noted that the strategic plan can be used as a mechanism for seeking additional ad hoc resourcing from APFIC Members and donors and to communicate the function of APFIC to a wider audience.

68. The Commission welcomed the 2008–2012 strategic plan for APFIC and endorsed it. The Commission further **recommended** that APFIC should continue to act as a regional consultative forum, to evaluate, monitor and advise, to promote subregional management initiatives, and to strengthen coordination on key issues identified by the Commission.



## **REGIONAL THEMES: CERTIFICATION IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE; CAPACITY MANAGEMENT AND COMBATING IUU FISHING**

69. The secretariat introduced this item on the basis of document APFIC/08/5 summarizing the findings and recommendations of the two regional consultative workshops on “Fishing capacity management and IUU fishing” held in Phuket, Thailand, from 13 to 15 June 2007 and on “Certification schemes for capture fisheries and aquaculture” held in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam from 18 to 20 September 2007. The two workshops received financial assistance from the Government of Sweden.

70. The regional consultative workshop “Fishing capacity management and IUU fishing” aimed at promoting increased awareness, understanding and action on one of the most fundamental tenets of fishing, that is ensuring that fishing efforts are commensurate with the productive capacity of the fishery resource and their sustainable utilization (FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, Article 7). The workshop endeavored to build a commitment to reducing fishing capacity across all over-fished fisheries and examine ways in which this could be achieved. The workshop was attended by a total of 41 persons from 13 member countries and six organizations (including FAO).

71. The main objective of the workshop was to examine the need to reduce fishing capacity in both large-scale and small-scale fisheries (including the costs and benefits of managing fisheries). The workshop was also asked to assess the current status in capacity reduction and control of IUU fishing and the actions being taken. An important objective was also to develop an action plan to address the issues.

72. The major outcome of the workshop was the adoption of a document on how to address the issues of IUU fishing and capacity reduction. The meeting agreed that the Southeast Asia RPOA was a useful framework for countries and regional organizations to start coordinated approaches to managing fishing capacity and IUU fishing. The workshop also agreed that it is time to take action and there is a strong mandate for this through the ministerial endorsements of the IPOA and the RPOA. The full report of the workshop can be found in APFIC/08/Inf.7.

73. The objective of the second regional consultative workshop on “Certification schemes for capture fisheries and aquaculture” was to review the costs and opportunities associated with certification schemes for fisheries and aquaculture in the APFIC region.

74. The workshop was attended by 49 participants from 13 member countries, INFOFISH, SEAFDEC, SBF, ICSF, the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), the World Wildlife Fund-Greater Mekong (WWF-Greater Mekong).

75. The workshop recognized that fisheries and aquaculture certification can offer tangible benefits to the APFIC member countries. However, it also recognized that a number of issues need to be taken into account and addressed for certification to effectively contribute to the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture in the region. These issues are: i) regional involvement in certification; ii) inclusion of small-scale fisheries and farmers into schemes; iii) harmonization and equivalence of certification schemes; iv) weighing the costs and benefits of certification schemes; v) governance and stakeholder involvement; and vi) capacity building at

both regional and national levels. A number of specific recommendations were identified for capture fisheries and aquaculture certification. The full workshop report can be found in APFIC/08/Inf.8.

76. At the second RCFM these two themes were discussed in detail and the comments and recommendations from the second RCFM report (APFIC/08/Inf.9) on these themes were also presented by the secretariat.

### **Responses by the commission and observers**

77. The Commission endorsed the action plans and recommendations of the two APFIC regional consultative workshops.

78. The Commission was informed that many APFIC countries have already approved or were in the process of drafting and approving national plans of action on IUU fishing (NPOA-IUU) or similar initiatives. Three countries (Australia, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea) out of the 15 Members present already have a NPOA-IUU. Six countries (China, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam) have either near final drafts or other programmes/initiatives that include specific measures to combat IUU fishing. Several other Members are planning to start this process. Several Members commented that although they had not undertaken an NPOA exercise, they had national programmes and strategies to address issues related to this.

79. The secretariat recalled that there is a place on the APFIC Web site where policy documents, including national action plans, strategic planning documents and NPOA, are collected. It was **recommended** that member countries send their significant policy documents to APFIC so that this work can be presented to the world showing what is being done in the region.

80. Several Members mentioned that NPOA-IUU should include socio-economic considerations and take into account the number of small-scale fishers. When dealing with IUU fishing we should not only look at the IUU fishing itself, but also the cause of the illegal fishing and work on the cause of the problems.

81. BOBP-IGO and SEAFDEC noted that their organizations are working with their respective members. BOBP-IGO noted that the organization has initiated a programme on monitoring, control and surveillance and developing national action plans for IUU fishing together with the four member countries. This work will later form the basis for a regional action plan on IUU fishing.

82. The APFIC secretary thanked Members for the feedback and noted that all member countries are moving towards a full NPOA or are having activities or programmes related to IUU fishing. The secretariat further requested that APFIC Members report to FAO on all these good national initiatives for combating IUU fishing.

83. Several examples of how to monitor and manage fisheries were given by the member countries.

84. In line with APFIC recommendations concerning fishing capacity management, several Members outlined their national activities relating to improving management of fishing capacity:

- Australia is working on fishing capacity management through various means, including through buy-back and implementation of its harvest strategy policy, in close consultation with its fishing industry.
- In the past year China has removed 260000 vessels from its marine fishery and 80 000 fishers have left the marine fishery and been retrained for onshore livelihoods.
- India is looking to cap its motorized artisanal fleet at 500000 craft and limit the number of commercial vessels. Resources for a vessel monitoring system (VMS) and monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) are being made available.
- Malaysia has worked on reducing trawler capacity, particularly in the nearshore zone.
- The Philippines is working on greater zonation of coastal areas and the shifting of excess capacity. Local ordinances are already in place in some municipalities to limit fishing effort and a nationwide effort is underway to implement a vessel registration scheme.
- Sri Lanka has just completed a comprehensive census of its marine and inland fisheries to establish a database on the size and scale of its marine fleet.
- Thailand has frozen the number of trawler, push-nets and anchovy fisheries for management of fishing capacity, including mesh size control and has undertaken a pilot low-cost vessel positioning system (VPS) using the mobile phone network.

85. Recognizing that there is great diversity in fisheries within the region and that IUU fishing exists in a wide variety of forms, *the Commission unanimously agreed on the following statement regarding the combating of IUU fishing:*

- The APFIC member countries are strongly committed to continuing their efforts to combat IUU fishing and take action against IUU fishing.
- The APFIC Members recognize the clear benefits from collaboration and coordination within the region in sharing experiences and information on actions to combat IUU fishing.
- Combating IUU fishing requires the allocation of financial resources, but these should be used wisely to keep costs down and to ensure that appropriate controls and measures are put in place.

86. Related to certification of capture fisheries and aquaculture, the Commission recognized that there are benefits from certification as a tool to improve management and improve the sector. It was noted by several member countries that the risk of excluding small-scale farmers and fisher folk from the certification schemes should be addressed by schemes and that cluster approaches were a mechanism to allow inclusion of small-scale farmers in certification initiatives.

87. It was noted that there are now several fisheries in the region that are in the process of being certified by an internationally recognized certification scheme.

88. In relation to certification of capture fisheries and aquaculture the Commission **recommended** that:

- special attention should be given to workable certification schemes for small-scale farmers and fisher folk;

- regional input in development of standards and harmonization of certification schemes should be continued; and
- any certification schemes being developed or already operational in the region should conform to international guidelines including the FAO guidelines on ecolabelling of marine capture fisheries products and the forthcoming FAO guidelines on certification of aquaculture products.

89. The Director-General of SBF thanked the Government of the Republic of Indonesia and APFIC for the invitation to join the thirtieth APFIC session as an observer. The Director-General gave a brief introduction to the fishing situation in the European Union (EU) and reflected that there are many similarities in the problems faced by Asian and EU fisheries, in particular the depletion of fish stocks, overfishing and how to reduce the fishing capacity. He emphasized that cooperation and the compliance with management measures by member countries were the key to the success of fisheries measures.

## **POLICY, EMERGING ISSUES AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CCRF**

90. The secretariat introduced this item on the basis of document APFIC/08/6 and the draft RCFM report (APFIC/08/Inf.9).

### **Report from the regional consultative forum**

91. The secretariat reviewed the report of the second APFIC RCFM and detailed the recommendations contained within the report.

92. The RCFM noted that fisheries and aquaculture remain very important production sectors in the APFIC region and the livelihoods of large numbers of people in the region are connected to them. Although there are great challenges facing the sector, significant advances are being made in reforming it. Fisheries continue to be under pressure and the need for more effective management is increasingly urgent. Aquaculture offers opportunities to the region, but the region must continue to improve the sector's performance.

93. It was recognized by the RCFM that APFIC Members are adapting well to new challenges facing fishers and aquaculturists in the APFIC region. The RCFM recognized that cooperation and collaboration is becoming stronger in the region and this positive trend should be continued.

94. The participants at the RCFM reviewed the main themes of the programme of work of APFIC over recent years and have been informed of the developments and achievements of the APFIC member countries. In this respect, the RCFM concluded that:

- **Low-value trash/fish** — Some progress has been made to reduce the production of low-value/trash fish. Improvements have been made in the areas of improved fishing gears, zoning and some efforts to reduce capacity in the trawl sector (value adding and better handling). However, production remains significant and the high proportion of low-value/trash fish is contributing to the growth of overfishing, including juveniles from high-value long-living species and this requires further attention by the member countries. There has been some progress in replacing the aquaculture sector's use of low-value/trash fish with compounded feeds.

- **Co-management** — The RCFM emphasized the importance of mainstreaming co-management approaches. Based on feedback from member countries it is apparent that co-management has been increasingly mainstreamed and now forms a significant part of management approaches in the region, particularly with regards to inland, inshore and coastal fisheries and some forms of aquaculture management in the region. Co-management approaches differ across countries, but they all fundamentally involve an authentic dialogue with fisheries agencies and fishers and fish farmers before a decision is reached.
- **APFIC work programme in the current biennium** — The RCFM recommended that the action plans and recommendations developed as part of the APFIC regional consultative workshops on “IUU fishing and capacity management” and “Certification in aquaculture and fisheries” provide a basis for guiding the work of member countries and regional organizations and others in the region. In this respect, the RCFM recommended that APFIC continue to monitor member country progress against these action plans noting the FAO guidelines for aquaculture certification will be submitted to the third session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture (COFI-AQ).

95. The RCFM recommended that APFIC should promote understanding of how to implement ecosystem approaches to aquaculture and fisheries management, particularly as applicable to the small-scale production sector, developing offshore fisheries and in the data-poor situations that prevail in the APFIC region. APFIC can promote the assessment of fisheries for management purposes.

96. The RCFM noted that APFIC should explore the human dimension of fisheries and aquaculture in the region as these subsectors restructure or are driven to change by internal and external forces. This would form the basis of advice on best approaches to the improvement of livelihoods, securing the rights of fishers, aquaculturists and their households.

97. The RCFM noted that APFIC should continue to facilitate information sharing on key issues relating to fisheries and aquaculture between regional organizations and arrangements and member countries. This would be achieved through continuing the regional consultative forum role of APFIC and targeted communications and networking activities. APFIC should also continue to monitor recent changes in member countries’ policies and the drivers for these. More specifically, APFIC should monitor the main biennial themes of APFIC such as IUU fishing, managing fishing capacity, certification, co-management and low-value trash fish.

98. Furthermore, it was noted that APFIC should continue to promote improved reporting and information, particularly in the areas where data is not reported in sufficient detail and focus more on information relating to stocks and systems and issues relating to management, including socio-economic data. APFIC should engage with subregional processes that aim to develop more effective management of fisheries and aquaculture, and broader environmental focused initiatives (e.g. lost and abandoned fishing gear).

99. The RCFM acknowledged that there are many areas of work relating to the issues confronting fisheries and aquaculture in the region. The RCFM also recognized that this would require extended activity, research or analysis which lay beyond APFIC’s capabilities to undertake directly. APFIC would need to get support from partner organizations to address these issues.

## **Other emerging issues in the fisheries sector**

100. There were several emerging areas identified by the RCFM that required more detailed review and advice. These areas could be addressed by other organizations and it was hoped that APFIC would be able to inform its members on this. These are (i) Review how fisheries and aquaculture can adapt or even benefit from the challenge of impacts from climate change; (ii) Evaluate the benefits (human and environmental) of MPA's and their trade-offs; (iii) Assess the impact of subsidies on fisheries and aquaculture in the region and the effect of their removal; (iv) Positive and negative impacts of reduction of fishing over-capacity, in particular strategies for mitigating negative human impacts; (v) Develop effective and practical methods for assessment of fishing capacity and strategies for encouraging capacity reduction; (vi) Promote harmonization of food standards and certification systems for member countries; (vii) Develop regional cooperation to manage fishing capacity and combat IUU fishing; (viii) Report on changing markets and trade in the region, in particular the effects of the development of FTA's, economic integration and WTO; (ix) Review the implications of increasing fuel and food (feed) prices on the sector; (x) Collation and review of existing information on resource status in the region and development of indicators for system/fishery health; (xi) Facilitate the harmonization of policies at provincial and national levels (as well as across agencies) and (xii) Effective planning for water development with minimal negative impact on inland fisheries.

101. **The Commission endorsed the RCFM recommendations and the RCFM Draft report** with minor adjustments. The Commission further noted that the "RCFM mechanism" was very useful for APFIC member countries. The role of APFIC as an advisory body and not a management body was underlined. Some countries noted that the real responsibility for management of the resources was within the countries and strengthening of fisheries management should be done within this context. It was noted that there was a need for better linkage between research and final management decisions, an area which could be facilitated by APFIC with other organizations undertaking fisheries research.

102. BOBP-IGO and SEAFDEC congratulated the Secretariat with a comprehensive report capturing the discussions from the 2<sup>nd</sup> RCFM.

## **Regional arrangements and initiatives**

103. **The RPOA** — This plan is a commitment to implement responsible fisheries management practices, including those to combat IUU fishing. RPOA cover the areas of the South China Sea, Sulu-Sulawesi Seas (Celebes Sea) and the Arafura and Timor Seas. The RPOA is a voluntary instrument and takes its core principles from already established international fisheries instruments for promoting responsible fishing practices. A series of senior officers meetings and a ministerial meeting were convened resulting in the signing of the RPOA document. The meeting was attended by representatives of 11 countries (Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam).

104. Of particular relevance to APFIC is that the RPOA countries acknowledge the important roles of regional organizations in strengthening fisheries management and conservation in the region including the FAO/APFIC, Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), ASEAN, INFOFISH, SEAFDEC, and the WorldFish Center. The RPOA recommends countries to

encourage relevant regional organizations to provide assistance in terms of technical support and development of guidelines, capacity building, sharing data and information on fisheries and trade, and strengthening networking for the purpose of enhancing participation and ensuring implementation of conservation and management measures in the region.

105. **SEAFDEC-ASEAN** — The SEAFDEC governing council has supported in principle the proposal for the establishment of the Regional Scientific Advisory Committee for Fisheries Management in Southeast Asia in response to the need to improve fisheries management, particularly addressing issues related to fishing capacity and IUU fishing, and enhancing information collection for fisheries management. ASEAN recently agreed to develop an ASEAN regional fisheries management mechanism (RFMM) for the ASEAN region in May 2008. In November 2007 SEAFDEC and ASEAN adopted the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (ASSP). The full texts of the statements of the Secretary-General of SEAFDEC appear in Appendix G.

106. It is suggested that APFIC will work closely with SEAFDEC to move this initiative forward as it fits the APFIC strategic goal of facilitating regional agreements.

107. **Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI)** — The APFIC secretariat provided a brief description of the CTI and some of its linkages to fisheries. It was **recommended** that the APFIC Members should keep APFIC updated on CTI activities, particularly when it was relevant to fisheries and fisheries management. It was noted that the CTI and the NPOA-IUU complement each other.

108. BOBP-IGO noted current management initiatives in the Bay of Bengal and made reference to the IOTC. BOBP-IGO informed the Commission of the RPOA on safety at sea, a draft of which should be in place by 2011.

### **Regionally important outcomes of international fora**

109. The secretariat made a presentation on regionally important outcomes from international fora based on document APFIC/08/6.

110. The COFI held its twenty-seventh session from 5 to 9 March 2007 in Rome, Italy. The meeting was characterized by perhaps the highest representation ever, active participation and significant outcomes on substantive issues. At the meeting:

- COFI reiterated its belief that FAO remain the sole global body competent in convening and leading global fisheries affairs;
- FAO was called upon to play a key role in cooperation amongst regional fisheries management organizations;
- questions were raised regarding the ecolabelling guidelines for fisheries products and there were requests for further work to be done in this area, particularly for inland fisheries;
- issues related to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) were raised and again FAO was requested to play an active role to ensure a balanced approach was taken to decision-making on CITES matters;
- FAO was called upon to assist in the area of catch documentation as a means to prevent the sale of products from IUU fishing;

- COFI stressed the fact that aquaculture budgetary allocation should adequately reflect its global role;
- focus was placed on recent evaluations of the performances of regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) and the conclusion that they were not adequately performing their management role because of the lack of appropriate compliance or support from their member countries;
- COFI requested FAO to provide support in the area of aquaculture certification;
- COFI highlighted the importance of aquaculture and small-scale fisheries in increasing fishery production to generate income and foreign exchange and thus alleviate poverty, increase food security and provide for diversification of employment; and
- COFI requested FAO to provide technical inputs in the area of fishing subsidies for submission to the WTO negotiations.

111. In relation to the last three points, the secretariat noted that APFIC has been involved in developing the FAO guidelines on aquaculture certification that are currently being prepared for consideration by the subcommittee on aquaculture. APFIC is also currently part of a working group led by FAO's Fisheries and Aquaculture Department to organize and convene a global meeting on small-scale fisheries, in partnership with SEAFDEC, the WorldFish Center and DOF Thailand in Bangkok from 12 to 17 October 2008. The secretariat also invited the Commission to report on activities relating to fishing subsidies in the region to the APFIC secretariat for submission to FAO.

112. Noting that COFI had highlighted a number of areas where they lacked information, **the secretariat recommended** the Members of the Commission to report back to COFI on their national or regional action plans and other efforts relating to:

- existing management initiatives in the Bay of Bengal and the South China Sea, the Yellow Sea and other small ecosystems in the region;
- the status of the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) in the region;
- the application of CCRF in aquaculture in the region; and
- measures for controlling IUU fishing.

113. The secretariat noted that the introduction of port states measures places the burden of regulation on the country providing access and in most cases it is difficult for them carry out such responsibilities. This is particularly true for countries with inadequate budget for regulation such as Cambodia, Myanmar and Timor-Leste, or countries with huge coastlines such as Indonesia. The secretariat highlighted that flag states' responsibilities will be an area to be addressed in the future.

114. Members noted the appropriateness of FAO as the sole global body competent in convening and leading global fisheries affairs.

115. Members emphasized that there are capacity reduction and management initiatives ongoing in the region, however it is clear that these are not being communicated to COFI. It was emphasized by the secretariat that Members should ensure that this type of information reaches COFI.



116. The secretariat reminded the Commission that APFIC does not report to COFI directly and that it is the responsibility of Member States to communicate their initiatives and successes to COFI.

117. Member States noted that flag states' responsibilities will be a new area of focus.

118. Malaysia informed the Commission that it is organizing a subregional meeting on IUU fishing and monitoring, control and surveillance for the southern and eastern area of the South China Sea and Sulu-Sulawesi Seas as part of its follow-up under the RPOA, and this will be convened in Kuching, Malaysia from 26 to 28 August 2008.

119. The Commission suggested that the COFI questionnaire should be redesigned, in particular to reflect ongoing efforts in certification, capacity, and management.

120. SEAFDEC informed the Commission that they held a consultation in July 2008 on climate change and its impact on fisheries.

### **Conclusions of the RFB secretariats network meeting (RSN1)**

121. This meeting was convened after the COFI meeting and the participants were the secretaries of RFMOs and advisory RFBs, such as APFIC. The meeting discussed the issues of COFI in relation to the work of RFB/RFMOs with a focus on RFMOs. The meeting:

- encouraged strengthening the mandates of RFMOs;
- noted that the issues of small-scale fisheries received significant attention in COFI, and that this trend is likely to continue in future;
- agreed that a Norwegian proposal for a global meeting on small-scale fisheries would offer a unique opportunity to provide an input from RSN members;
- noted that a key issue to be addressed in combating IUU fishing is the lack of vital information and that a general lack of human and financial capacity to deal with unregistered vessels and minimal surveillance capacity are also causes for concern;
- noted ongoing work sanctioned by COFI to develop a comprehensive global record of fishing vessels; and
- emphasized that fisheries overcapacity constitutes an ongoing and difficult issue that should be kept on the network's agenda.

122. Members noted the development of many RFMOs/RFBs and inquired about duplication of efforts especially with the move towards an ecosystem management approach.

123. SEAFDEC noted its collaboration with FAO, the WorldFish Center and DOF Thailand to organize the global meeting on small-scale fisheries in Bangkok from 12 to 17 October 2008.

124. BOBP-IGO regretted that they were not requested to collaborate in the small-scale fisheries conference and stressed that their activities predominantly addressed issues of concern to small-scale fisheries and often in strong collaboration with FAO.

## **CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna & Flora)**

125. FAO has recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with CITES to provide scientific information as part of the listing process.

126. The listing of *Anguilla anguilla* (European eel) under the CITES list Appendix II may have implications for the culture of the European eel in Asia, as there will effectively be a ban on the movement of glass eels from Europe to Asia. Indonesia is considering developing their domestic *Anguilla* populations for aquaculture and since these are not considered under threat the listing of *Anguilla* may be of some concern.

127. Members expressed some concerns in relation to the listing of CITES species prior to the MOU between FAO and CITES and enquired about the CITES listing and delisting process.

128. The secretariat clarified the relationship between FAO and CITES and informed the Commission on the major items for the next COFI meeting to be held from 2 to 6 March 2009 in Rome, Italy.

### **Reporting on the implementation of the code of conduct for responsible fisheries**

129. The Commission noted that at times the larger scale commercial fisheries and the small-scale fisheries sector have conflicting interests.

130. Australia noted that there was a need for a structured approach to reporting back on fisheries management and governance to APFIC by member countries. This should be followed up by member countries and the APFIC secretariat. For example, it would be useful to get reporting on management measures to combat IUU fishing.

131. It was noted by Cambodia that the CCRF has been translated into Khmer and a Cambodian Fisheries Code of Conduct (CamCode) was being developed. It was expected that the CamCode would be finalized at the end of 2008. It was noted that the CamCode was not a legal instrument but a document containing guiding principles.

132. India stated that the FAO CCRF is being translated into most of the Indian local languages with the support of BOBP-IGO and this will form the basis of a national CCRF.

133. Philippines noted that in relation to the ecosystem approach, food security and conservation efforts should be balanced equally and both should be part of the solution. Fish refugia and sanctuaries, if managed appropriately, can be of benefit for both the fisheries sector and other sectors (e.g. ecotourism, biodiversity conservation).

134. Sri Lanka recommended that there should be national action plans in place to support the implementation of the CCRF.

135. Thailand noted that the Thai Fisheries Act was first developed in 1947 and the principle then, as now, was to provide the power to the line ministry and this is still reflected today creating a flexible and fast platform to adjust the fisheries law. The current draft of the new fisheries law was under legal review prior to being passed to parliament. Thailand noted that the CCRF and RFMM had been translated into Thai.

136. It was noted that “destructive forms of fishing” was a more accurate description than “destructive fishing practices” as the latter implies that fishing is in itself a destructive practice. The Commission agreed that the former term could be retained as it was used in other fora.

137. In relation to the exploitation of deepwater fisheries, it was noted that adequate definitions for “vulnerable marine ecosystems” and “adverse impacts” do not yet exist.

138. BOBP-IGO noted that regional efforts have been made to translate the FAO CCRF into a regional context. It was underlined that the CCRF is now 30 years old in October 2008 and this would be a good time to review what has been done and what can still be done to implement the FAO CCRF.

139. SEAFDEC gave a comprehensive overview of what has been done by SEAFDEC on working together with its member countries to implement the CCRF. SEAFDEC has developed regional guidelines on CCRF and supported the translation of the regional CCRF into national languages of its member countries and is continuously supporting the implementation of the CCRF in the region.

140. The SBF noted that IUU fishing is an important issue in the EU and some progress is being made on illegal fishing and port state measures. A recent initiative on requirements for fisheries products entering the EU relating to compliance with responsible fishing practices, may be put in place from 2010 onwards. It was noted that there is still some work to be done by APFIC Members to have the accountability and traceability requirements in place to comply with these standards.

141. It was noted that the FAO guidelines for aquaculture certification were being developed and stakeholder expert workshops have been held in Bangkok, Thailand March 2007 and in Beijing, China, May 2008. It was noted that there had been good regional input into the process of developing the guidelines and the APFIC secretariat and some member countries had been active in this process.

## **APFIC WORK IN NEXT BIENNIUM 2009-2010**

142. The secretariat introduced this agenda item on the basis of document APFIC/08/7 and the summary conclusions of the RCFM. The secretariat introduced the framework for the workplan to be carried out by APFIC in the biennium starting in August 2008. This is to commence immediately following this thirtieth session of APFIC and lead up to the third RCFM and the thirty-first session in August 2010. The Commission was informed of the two emerging issues for the coming biennium of work for APFIC, namely “Managing fishing capacity and IUU fishing in the Asian region” and “Certification schemes for capture fisheries and aquaculture”. These are described in APFIC’s *Status and potential for fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific 2008* (APFIC/08/Inf.5). Both issues are considered to be of importance to the fisheries sector in the region.

143. As outlined in the strategic plan and also as recommended in the report of the seventy-first Executive Committee meeting, the following key activities will be undertaken by the Commission and APFIC secretariat during the coming biennium of work as follows:

### **September 2008**

The report and recommendations of the thirtieth session of APFIC will be communicated to FAO prior to the meeting of the committee on fisheries in 2009 and the APFIC secretariat will report to the regional secretariats network meeting.

### **May 2009**

The secretariat will organize and implement the first regional consultative workshop. This will cover the practical applications for Asia and the Pacific region of the ecosystem approach for the management of fisheries and aquaculture and how this relates to the implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

### **August 2009**

The seventy-second session of the Executive Committee of APFIC will meet in August 2009 to review: (i) the role of APFIC; (ii) outcomes and recommendations of the APFIC regional consultative workshop; (iii) preparations for the third RCFM; (iv) emerging issues policy and recommendations for future focus of APFIC's programme of work. The Executive Committee will also develop the agenda for the thirty-first session of APFIC to be held in September 2010.

### **October 2009**

The secretariat will organize and implement the second regional consultative workshop and this will cover recommendations and policy advice on how to support and improve the livelihoods of small-scale fishers and aquaculturists.

### **March 2010**

APFIC secretariat with the support of regional organization partners and member countries will prepare the third RCFM in August 2010. The secretary will inform all members, all regional and subregional organizations and arrangements with relevance to fisheries/aquaculture in the APFIC region of the proposed programme for the RCFM and invite their participation and suggestions for changes to the programme.

### **September 2010**

The third RCFM will be held in September 2010, immediately preceding the thirty-first session of APFIC. Immediately following the third RCFM the Commission will hold its biennial session that will consider the outcome of the workshops and the RCFM and will also consider any additional matters raised by Members and may wish to develop recommendations for COFI and the RCFM.

144. The budget of APFIC is reported in detail in the report of the seventy-first session of the Executive Committee (APFIC/08/Inf.4). APFIC is able to leverage considerable in-kind co-financing from its regional partners and member countries.

145. The **secretariat recommended** that member countries consider seriously some form of ad hoc financial support to key APFIC activities such as the regional consultative workshops or the RCFM. In-kind financing could be more assured if member countries would commit to the financial support of the additional regional workshops. He noted that several Members have done this during the current biennium.

## **Responses by the commission and observers**

146. It was noted by several member countries that there should be continued follow up on the themes such as IUU fishing, certification, co-management. The Commission agreed on the two new biennial themes, “the ecosystem approach to fisheries” and “market linkages, trade and rural finance’, to be included in the next workplan of APFIC. It was underlined by the Commission that the approaches under the two themes should include inland as well as coastal fisheries. There would also be some aspects of aquaculture covered under each theme.

147. The 2009 to 2010 workplan was endorsed by the Commission and is included as Appendix H.

## **OTHER MATTERS**

148. It was noted by Indonesia that more effort should be made to include small-scale fisheries in the development of the fisheries sector in terms of overall fisheries management and IUU fishing. There is a risk that small-scale fisherfolk are being left behind in the development of the sector and this should be avoided. BOBP-IGO fully supported the inclusion of small-scale fisheries in the sector’s development and confirmed the need to give special attention to this vulnerable group. It was noted that the issue had been raised at the previous COFI by BOBP-IGO.

149. Several Members mentioned an interest in receiving guidance on information sharing and vessel registration systems (e.g. vessel number, licensed gear, port, owner.) and practical means to implementing vessel registration schemes.

150. The incoming secretary of APFIC, Mr Simon Funge-Smith mentioned the contribution of the outgoing secretary of APFIC, Mr Derek Staples and thanked him for all the hard work he had done during his term of office. The Commission welcomed the incoming secretary of APFIC and thanked him for taking on this important task.

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

151. The Republic of Korea was unanimously elected chair country of the Commission for the coming biennium.

152. Viet Nam was elected as vice-chair country of the Commission, subject to confirmation by the Government of Viet Nam.

153. Sri Lanka and Philippines were unanimously elected to serve as Members of the Executive Committee, in addition to the new chair country, the vice-chair country and the outgoing chair country (Indonesia).

## **DATE AND PLACE OF THE THIRTY-FIRST SESSION OF APFIC**

154. The new chair country of APFIC kindly offered to host the thirty-first session of APFIC in 2010 and it was agreed that the third RCFM in conjunction with the thirty-first session will be held in the Republic of Korea, in September 2010.

155. The chairperson of APFIC concluded by expressing his appreciation for the active participation of the delegates and declared the thirtieth session of APFIC closed.

## **ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

156. In adopting the session report, the Commission unanimously agreed to record its deep appreciation to the Government of Indonesia for the generous hospitality accorded to the Commission.

157. The report of the session was adopted on 13 August 2008.

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the Agenda and arrangements for the Session
3. Activities of APFIC since the twenty-ninth Session
4. Overview: status and potential of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific region
5. APFIC's strategy and promotion of regional initiatives for more effective fisheries management
  - Regional consultative forum
  - Facilitating regional agreements and arrangements
  - Promoting regional dialogue
  - Capacity building
  - Responses by the commission and observers
6. Regional themes: certification in fisheries and aquaculture; capacity management and combating IUU fishing
  - Responses by the commission and observers
7. Policy, emerging issues and implementation of CCRF
  - Report from the regional consultative forum
  - Other emerging issues in the fisheries sector
  - Regional arrangements and initiatives
  - Regionally important outcomes of international fora
  - Conclusions of the RFB secretariats network meeting (RSN1)
  - CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna & Flora)
  - Reporting on the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF)
8. APFIC work in next biennium 2009–2010
  - Responses by the commission and observers
9. Other Matters
11. Election of Officers
12. Date and place of the Thirty-first Session of APFIC
13. Adoption of the Report

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## LIST OF DOCUMENTS

**A. Working documents:**

APFIC/08/1	Provisional Agenda and Timetable
APFIC/08/2	Inter-sessional activities of APFIC
APFIC/08/2 Add.1	Detailed list of APFIC Inter-sessional Activities
APFIC/08/3	Status and potential of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific
APFIC/08/4	APFIC's strategy and promotion of regional initiatives for more effective fisheries management
APFIC/08/5	APFIC Regional Consultative Workshops
APFIC/08/6	Policy, emerging issues and implementation of the CCRF
APFIC/08/7	Major issues for APFIC's work in the next biennium

**B. Information documents:**

APFIC/08/Inf.1	Provisional list of documents
APFIC/08/02/Inf.2	Provisional list of participants
APFIC/08/Inf.3	Report of the Twenty-ninth Session of APFIC, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 21–23 August 2006
APFIC/08/Inf.4	Report of the Seventy-first Session of the APFIC Executive Committee, Jakarta, Indonesia, 20–22 August, 2007
APFIC/08/Inf.5	Draft document of the Status and Potential of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific 2008
APFIC/08/Inf.6	Strategic support to Regional Capacity Building through the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission
APFIC/08/Inf.7	Report of the Regional Consultative Workshop on managing fishing capacity and IUU fishing in the Asian Region, Phuket, Thailand, 13–15 June 2007
APFIC/08/Inf.8	Report of the Regional Consultative Workshop on certification schemes for capture fisheries and aquaculture, HCMC, Viet Nam, 18–20 September 2007
APFIC/08/Inf.9	Draft Report of the Second Regional Consultative Forum Meeting

**Welcome Remarks by  
Professor Widi A. Pratikto, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Marine  
Affairs and Fisheries and APFIC Chairperson**

His Excellency The Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia, Mr Ndiaga Gueye, Chief, International Institutions and Liaison Service, FAO Fisheries Department, The Honorable Governor of North Sulawesi, Distinguish Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the opening ceremony of the Thirtieth APFIC Main Session. As the APFIC Chairman of the period of 2007–2009, I am very grateful that during the APFIC Second RCFM we have experienced a very lively and informative discussion which resulted in a very important and useful recommendation for the Thirtieth APFIC Main Session.

Several issues have been raise during the RCFM such as fishery management, capacity reduction, product certification and IUU Fishing, and the presentation from various experts from the region of Asia-Pacific yielded ways to address them or at least has illuminate our mind to further search for better way to solve them.

We have also been informed regarding the success stories from our region which has been supported whole-heartedly by the FAO in general and APFIC in particular. These are a very good example which all of us could refer to. I sincerely hope that APFIC can continuously assist all member countries so that all member countries have their own success stories.

Excellencies, distinguish participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In formulating the regional policy on marine and fisheries in Asia-Pacific we should not forget that the focus for fishery management and capacity reduction should not harm the livelihood of artisanal fishermen. Although the meaning of the term varied among APFIC member countries, I believe that most fishermen in the Region of Asia-Pacific still live under subsistence level. We should empower and build their capacity, through co-management scheme, where the government and the people are equal partner to manage fishery resources.

Aquaculture is an alternative which has to be the focused in every APFIC member countries policy in developing their fishery policy. To address the knowledge gap, sharing between members should be encouraged and put into policy. Aquaculture can address at least partially the issues of capacity reduction, conservation and also renewable food source and security as well as nutrition to the people.

Excellencies, distinguish participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In addressing the issue of IUU fishing however, we should not hesitate to enforce the legal and binding measures such Port State Measures. IUU fishing has mitigates the effort to sustainably manage fishery resources which cause the fish stock to decreases alarmingly without the slightest chance of regeneration. Concerted action by APFIC member countries to cooperate in combating the IUU fishing is clearly and definitely needed. Together we could definitely put an end to this destructive activity. Transnational crime needs transnational law enforcement. In the case of IUU fishing, legal and binding measures is needed and enforced internationally and regionally.

For product certification, we should remember that not every APFIC member countries have the capacity to produce fishery related product with international quality. Assistance in the form of capacity building in production and quality control should be given to the countries which needed it. I hope that APFIC, as one of the oldest fishery bodies in Asia-Pacific, could facilitate assistance in this important issue.



Excellencies, distinguish participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to remind you that the most important fact of policy is to implement and to monitor its implementation. From the recommendation of the Second RCFM, I sincerely believe that we should be able to formulate a new policy or to amend the old one. We could also intensify our monitoring effort to the implementation of all the regional policies which has been ratified by the APFIC member countries. Perhaps the keyword is the political will of every government to implement every international measure which has been design to implement the fishery management, capacity reduction, product certification and combating IUU fishing efforts.

Excellencies, distinguish participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you very much for your hard work during the Second RCFM, however we still have some hard work ahead of us. These next few days during Thirtieth APFIC Main Session would be a testament of our commitment to the development of fishery in the region of Asia-Pacific. Therefore let us continuously work in the friendly, democratic and encouraging manner during the Thirtieth APFIC Main Session in which we always been work during the Second RCFM.

Again, thank you very much, God Bless and God Speed.

**Opening Speech by  
by H.E. V. Adm. (Ret.) Freddy Numberi, The Minister of Marine Affairs and  
Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia**

Excellencies, Distinguish Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the Thirtieth Main Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission. On the behalf of the government of the Republic of Indonesia allow me to extend our warmest welcome to all of you. It is an honor for us to host such an important and defining session in the region of Asia and the Pacific.

The Government of the Republic of Indonesia has always been cooperating with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation as a part of its commitment to support any effort to eradicate hunger, ensuring food security and good nutrition through the practice of agriculture, fishery and forestry. While In the field of Marine and Fisheries, The Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia and the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission has always been working together in concerted efforts to develop sustainable and responsible utilization of fisheries, aquaculture and related aquatic resources in the region of Asia-Pacific.

To put those commitments, the Republic of Indonesia has initiated the Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) to promote responsible fisheries practices including combating the illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing practices. The RPOA is the first of regional plan of its kind in the world and based the implementation of the FAO International Plan of Action to prevent, deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IPOA-IUU). It was adopted during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Senior Official Meeting and Regional Ministerial Meeting on Promoting Responsible Fishing Practices in Bali, Indonesia from May 2–4, 2007. The meeting was followed by 10 countries in the region of Asia-Pacific: Indonesia, Australia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, Filipina, Timor-Leste, Singapore, Thailand, Papua New Guinea, and Brunei Darussalam.

Excellencies, Distinguish Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The global phenomenon of climate change demands our undivided attention, it has affected agricultural, fisheries and forestry sectors in all countries including in the region of Asia and Pacific. The phenomenon posed a significant threat to the agricultural, forestry and fisheries commodities and production systems and also to food security. We should put this as one of the primary consideration in the Thirtieth APFIC Main Session because we are trying to formulate the regional policy in the Asia and Pacific.

In addressing this phenomenon, the Republic of Indonesia's initiate the Coral Triangle Initiative or CTI on Coral Reefs, Fisheries, and Food security. This initiative centered on high-level, joint political commitments by the six governments of the region, namely Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, East Timor, Papua New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands supported by significant international funding commitments. The intention is to accelerate the development of networks of marine protected areas across the Coral Triangle, and to formalize collaboration with other governments in the Coral Triangle Region.

I would like to remind you that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Ocean Related (APEC) Ministerial Meeting which was held in Bali September 13–17, 2005, adopted the Bali Plan of Action which seeks to balance conservation and management of marine resources with regional economic growth under the motto of “Toward Healthy Ocean and Coast for the Sustainable Growth and Prosperity of Asia-Pacific Community”. Also in this meeting the ministers recommend to increase their efforts to strengthen and update fisheries governance and management including through reform of and cooperation in Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs).

Again, the Republic of Indonesia is a full member of Indian Ocean Tuna Commission or IOTC to show our concern in the effort of sustainable management of tuna and tuna-like species in the regions of Asia and Africa. The Republic of Indonesia is also a full member of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Blue fin Tuna or CCSBT and currently a cooperating non-member of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) to show our commitment to the conservation and the management of highly migratory species of fish. By joining these Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), the Government of the Republic of Indonesia put its concern and commitment regarding conservation into implementation.

We should not forget that the aim of the policy making session that we are going to do is to eradicate hunger and ensure food security and good nutrition through sustainable and responsible utilization of natural marine and fishery resources. However, we also have to remember that most of the fishermen in the region of Asia-Pacific live in subsistence level. These small and artisanal fishermen are prone to changes, they will have difficulties to understand and follow innovations in their livelihood even if it is for the better. This is because being fishermen have been their livelihood for generations.

Therefore these small and artisanal fishermen should be the focus of our policy making in order to ensure their continuous development, empowerment and improvement toward better future and live for them and their family. We should not put them on the line in because of our effort to sustainably and responsibly manage the marine and fishery natural resources.

I would like to remind you that a high level conference of heads of state (HOS), scientists, non-governmental organizations, journalists, private sectors and stakeholders discussing global ocean issues with the title of World Ocean Conference will be held in Manado, Indonesia in May 11–15, 2009. I believe that this conference is a good opportunity for all of us to once again working together to address the global issues which affected our ocean.

The ocean is our last frontier, the last region on earth with largely untapped natural resources and enormous potentials, which I believe, mankind's largest common capital for its development and survival. What we begin now in good faith and conciously to our ocean, will show our children and their children's children, the right way to utilize, reserach and to manage the ocean is to do it together as one.

Allow me to show our gratitude to all of you for attending and participating in the Thirtieth Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) Main Session. I believe that in the next few days you will be engaged in an interesting process of policy making based on shared vision on the field of marine and fisheries. Although we had had our differences, we share a common vision to develop the marine and fishery sector in the Asia-Pacific region. I sincerely believe that you will have a very good and fruitful session. Enjoy your stay at Manado.

Thank you very much,

**Opening Remarks by  
Mr Ndiaga Gueye, Chief for International Institutions and Liaison Service  
FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Economic and Policy Division (FIEP)**

Good morning, on behalf of Mr Ichiro Nomura, Assistant Director-General, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, it is my great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you to this Thirtieth Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC).

We are honoured to have with us today The Hon. Freddy Numberi, Minister, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesia. Excellency, thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to join us. FAO is very grateful to the Government and the people of Indonesia for the hospitality and for the excellent support and commitment that has been received for the organization of this session. I am also pleased to see that we have very good attendance here today. This clearly reflects the importance you all attach to APFIC and to FAO's work in fisheries. Now, without taking too much of your time, I would like to touch briefly on some of the issues you will be discussing during the session.

First, Status and potential of fisheries and aquaculture: The importance of fisheries and aquaculture in the Asia-Pacific region can hardly be overestimated. There are millions people who depend on fisheries and aquaculture and related activities in fish processing, marketing and distribution. Fisheries and aquaculture also significantly contribute to food security in the region. In addition to these benefits, aquatic resources exploited by capture fisheries and aquaculture offer an opportunity for major sustainable contributions to economic growth, poverty alleviation and food supply. Well-managed fisheries resources can contribute more to GDP than is currently the case. However, the fisheries resources in the region are under threat. More and more fish stocks are getting over-exploited and their habitats are being degraded. The trend towards unsustainable levels of fishing capacity and fishing effort is of great concern to stakeholders. Reversing this trend through efficient and effective fisheries management policies and approaches has become very urgent for fisheries managers.

Second, Building on the theme of its first meeting that was held in Kuala Lumpur in 2006, the Second Consultative Forum Meeting concluded last week in this beautiful city of Manado focused on "Adapting to emerging challenges: promoting effective arrangements for managing fisheries and aquaculture in the Asia-Pacific region". I hope that your deliberations will lead to the identification of mechanisms and strategies that can/will facilitate the implementation of the main recommendations of the Forum meeting. This agenda item is a key one.

Third, the Commission will also be asked to identify the major theme for APFIC biennium work plan for 2009/10 and identify major issues that will be focus of APFIC's work. The Executive Committee has suggested a number of topics in its last meeting. Your guidance is needed on a number of recommendations that were made by the last session of the Executive Committee.

Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates, before I conclude my remarks, I would just like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has enthusiastically contributed to the organization of this Thirtieth Session of APFIC. It is our belief that APFIC constitutes an irreplaceable forum for the consideration of major fisheries issues in this region and to agree on ways of implementing plans developed to address these issues. It is also encouraging to note progress made year after year thanks to the continuous commitment and ownership of its members. FAO is committed to continue to work with, the countries, the donors, the IGO and our NGO partners for the well-being of fishers and fish farmers in the Asia-Pacific region. I wish you fruitful deliberations.

Thank you for your attention.

**Statement by  
Dr Siri Ekamarai, Secretary-General of the Southeast Asian  
Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC)**

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen

Firstly, allow me to thank APFIC for the invitation extended to SEAFDEC to attend this meeting. This will give SEAFDEC the chance to exchange views and experiences with all of you and to raise your awareness on the efforts of SEAFDEC to promote sustainable fisheries in Southeast Asia.

As a regional fisheries development organization, SEAFDEC is continued to strengthen our collaboration and cooperation not only with the ASEAN but also with other international and regional organizations concerned with the promotion of sustainable fisheries in the Southeast Asian region including APFIC.

During the Second Regional Consultative Forum Meeting arranged by APFIC, which immediately preceded this meeting, SEAFDEC presented its support to an initiative on the ASEAN Regional Fisheries Management Mechanism (ARFMM) that is relevant to the promotion sustainable fisheries management in the region. This initiative is envisaged to be parallel with the mechanism within SEAFDEC on the Regional Advisory Committee for Fisheries Management in Southeast Asia (RAC) which was established and adopted by the SEAFDEC Council in April 2008 to provide advice to the SEAFDEC Council on issues related to fisheries management, particularly to address the concerns on improving fisheries management in the region such as addressing the Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated or IUU fishing as well as issues related to fishing capacity, fishing vessel registration system, impact of climate change to fisheries, etc.

Other initiative is the establishment of the Framework for Fishery Statistics of Southeast Asia which is aimed to provide a unified regional platform for cooperation in fishery statistics and serve as minimum requirement for the collection of fishery statistics that can be achieved by the countries in Southeast Asia. The framework is envisage to entail greater and more effective sharing fishery data and information, leading to closer dialogues among countries at both regional and subregional levels in addressing common fisheries concerns. The new framework is also meant to provide inputs in developing the regional database for fishery management which is being initiated through the RAC that could assist the SEAFDEC Council in addressing issues related to sustainable fisheries management.

Regarding issue on certification on fisheries and aquaculture, SEAFDEC in November 2005 conducted a short regional study on eco-labeling of aquatic products in the ASEAN countries. The study recommended many important issues to be further implemented. In addition, with support from the Swedish Board of Fisheries through Sida, SEAFDEC initiated a project in 2007 to explore ways and means of developing an incentive for sustainable fisheries through the promotion of eco-labeling, including identified a set of candidates of the region's products to be used in exploring standards, criteria and certification processes, critical elements for the certifying body, the role of governments, and the appropriate certification schemes.

For capacity management and combating IUU fishing, SEAFDEC has conducted to support the establishment of ARFMM aimed at improving capacity for the management of fisheries and important coastal fisheries (fisheries refugia), and strengthening the capacity to monitor and record active fishing effort in coastal fisheries. To tackle overcapacity problem, the ASEAN-SEAFDEC member countries agreed to promote the improvement and/or establishment of system for fishing vessel registration and in addressing the issues related to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) and destructive fishing.

The establishment of a regional fishing vessels registration system is now being pursued by SEAFDEC as this could be used as reference in understanding the size and structure of large and small-scale fisheries as well as to support sustainable fisheries management in the Southeast Asian region. SEAFDEC with the support of Sida organized the “Expert Meeting on Fishing Vessel Registration” from 30 June to 2 July 2008 in Phuket, Thailand to facilitate the process of improving and/or establishing systems for registration of boats or vessels in the ASEAN region. Concerns in vessel registration and licensing will also be deliberated on during the next meeting of the Regional Advisory Committee for Fisheries Management (RAC) to be convened in September this year.

Under the issue on implementation of CCRF, the global Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries was used as the framework and guiding principle for development of the adopted Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region during the 2001 Millennium Conference. While promoting the implementation of the CCRF in the ASEAN region, and in order to make the CCRF fully understood by the stakeholders in the ASEAN region, where fisheries is characterized as multi-gear and multi-species and mostly small-scale, SEAFDEC regionalized the CCRF starting in 1998 with long-term regionalization process funded by the Japanese Trust Fund (from 1998 to 2007) which considered the specific nature, needs and requirements of the fisheries in the region. The outcomes of such regionalization were four regional guidelines that cover the whole facets of fisheries such as responsible fishing operations, fisheries management, aquaculture, and fisheries post-harvest and trade; and the Supplementary Guidelines on Co-Management Using Group User Rights, Fishery Statistics, Indicators and Fisheries Refugia (to substantiate the regional guidelines on fisheries management). The regional guidelines have been recognized by the ASEAN countries as important tools in bridging the gaps between internationally adopted initiatives and the actual implementation of the CCRF at the national and local levels.

After the publication and dissemination stages of the regional guidelines, SEAFDEC continued to promote the CCRF in the region through capacity building and human resource development with the funding support by Sida. In order to continue providing support to the ASEAN countries in further achieving the implementation of the CCRF, SEAFDEC has always considered embedding the essence of the CCRF in the planning and implementation of the SEAFDEC activities. To review the progress and achievements made by the member countries and SEAFDEC in the implementation of the CCRF, SEAFDEC conducted the Regional Seminar on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in Bangkok in October 2007. SEAFDEC noted during the seminar that all countries in the ASEAN region have embraced the CCRF in various degrees of implementation. Most of the countries have translated in CCRF into their national languages to promote wider adoption by all stakeholders. SEAFDEC also continues to assist the ASEAN countries in mainstreaming the CCRF through the regional guidelines into the countries’ respective national policies.

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, it was our persistent effort in promoting the implementation of the CCRF in the ASEAN region that made SEAFDEC the latest recipient of the prestigious Margarita Lizarraga Medal Award for the biennium 2006-2007 given by FAO in November 2007. The Medal Award has given SEAFDEC more inspiration and aspiration to set higher sights in promoting responsible fisheries in Southeast Asia. On the Emerging Issues in line with internal initiatives, SEAFDEC has always provided the forum where ASEAN-SEAFDEC member countries could discuss and exchange views on issues related to evolving fisheries situations that have serious implications to the ASEAN region’s fish trade including the sustainability of the fisheries resources. Through a series of consultations, the ASEAN-SEAFDEC member countries have been given the opportunity to respond to international initiatives including the development of common positions and policy options reflecting the ASEAN fisheries in international fora. Among the emerging issues discussed during the series of consultations include issues related to the requirements of CITES (sea turtles, sharks, sea cucumber), eco-labeling, aquaculture related issues (e.g. chemical/antibiotic residues of aquaculture products), CCRF, small-scale fisheries, poverty alleviation, climate change, etc.

In 2008, SEAFDEC convened two Regional Consultations. The first in February came up with common regional direction to address issues that have potential impacts on fisheries in the ASEAN region, including: the Legally-binding Instrument of Port State Measures, Traceability, Certification and Labeling, Small-scale Fisheries. The common position could serve as guide for the ASEAN and SEAFDEC member countries in voicing the regional interests in relevant international fora. The second Consultation in July discussed important issues relevant to emerging fisheries policies including climate change. The Consultation came up with proposed activities including the integration of climate change into fisheries policy frameworks and conduct of programs aimed to minimize the impacts from fisheries and aquaculture to climate change.

For small-scale fisheries, SEAFDEC has always recognized the importance of small-scale fisheries for the Southeast Asian countries as the sector has been contributing significantly to food security, livelihood and economic development of the region; and also the need to ensure the sustainable development of small-scale fisheries in the region. Considering that the Global Conference in Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries: Bringing Together Responsible Fisheries and Social Development will organized in October 2008 in Bangkok, it was deemed necessary for the Southeast Asian region to come up with a harmonized approach in ensuring the sustainable development of small-scale fisheries, and to reflect the region's seriousness in addressing the issue to the international communities. The Regional Technical Consultation on Small-scale Fisheries in Southeast Asia was organized by SEAFDEC on 29 April–2 May 2008 in Bangkok to prepare the Southeast Asian common and coordinated position for the promotion of sustainable small-scale fisheries and prepare the member countries to actively participate and provide inputs during the Global Conference. The coordinated position, which was submitted to higher authorities of SEAFDEC and the ASEAN, is envisaged to provide basis for the ASEAN and SEAFDEC to prepare relevant inputs and interventions during the Global Conference. In addition, based on the agreed conclusion at the RSN1 (Regional Fisheries Bodies Network Meeting, March 2007), SEAFDEC has developed the Global dedicated web site on Small-scale Fisheries to provide forum for RFBs members in providing and changing information on regional and national policy, initiatives and issues on small-scale fisheries.

To ensure that the concerns from fisheries sector are properly accommodated at international conventions, ASEAN-SEAFDEC member countries agreed to take more substantial role during international meetings with the coordinated positions on behalf of the Southeast Asian countries. SEAFDEC in collaboration with the member countries would also develop appropriate technical programs to support the member countries on each particular issue, for example: on the safety and quality of products, poverty alleviation, climate change, eco-labeling, traceability, criteria for certification of fishery products, port-state measures and others.

With that Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to reiterate here that SEAFDEC would be willing to establish cooperative linkages with other organizations working on the development of sustainable fisheries in the ASEAN region. SEAFDEC will also continue working closely with APFIC in promoting the proper utilization of living aquatic resources through sustainable development and management of fisheries in the ASEAN region. Thank you for your kind attention.

**APFIC BIENNIAL WORK PLAN 2009–2010**

As outlined in the Strategic Plan and also as recommended in the report of the Seventy-first Executive Committee, the following key activities will be undertaken by the commission and APFIC secretariat during the coming biennium of work as follows:

*September 2008*

The report and recommendations of the Thirtieth Session of APFIC are communicated to FAO prior to the Committee on Fisheries (2009) and APFIC secretariat will report to the Meeting of the Regional Secretariats Network Meeting.

*May 2009*

The Secretariat organizes and implements the first Regional Consultative workshop on one of the Commissions top two priority emerging issues. The first workshop will cover the practical applications for the Asia-Pacific region of the Ecosystem Approach for the management of fisheries and aquaculture and how this relates to the implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

*August 2009*

The Seventy-second Session of the Executive Committee of APFIC meets in August 2009 to review (i) role of APFIC; (ii) outcomes and recommendations of the APFIC Regional Consultative workshops; (iii) preparations for the Third RCFM; (iv) emerging issues policy and recommendations for future focus of APFIC's programme of work; and (v) the Executive Committee will also develop the agenda for the Thirty First Session of the Commission to be held in August 2010.

*October 2009*

The Secretariat organizes and implements the second Regional Consultative workshops on one of the Commissions top two priority emerging issues. The workshop will cover recommendations and policy advice on how to support and improve the livelihoods of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture.

*March 2010*

APFIC secretariat with the support of Regional Organization partners and member countries will prepare the Third Regional Consultative Forum Meeting (RCFM) in August 2010. The Secretary informs all Members, all regional and subregional organizations and arrangements with relevance to fisheries/aquaculture in the APFIC region of the proposed program for the RCFM and invites their participation and suggestions for the changes to the program.

*August 2010*

The Third RCFM is held in August 2010, immediately preceding the Thirty-first Session of APFIC. Immediately following the Third RCFM the Commission will hold its biennial Session that will consider the outcome of the workshops and the RCFM and will also consider any additional matters raised by Members and may wish to develop recommendations for COFI and the RCFM.

*Information collection and dissemination*

The APFIC secretariat contributes to the collection and dissemination of quality data and statistics, particularly those relating to small-scale fisheries and rural aquaculture. The APFIC web site will be used to provide a platform for the dissemination and exchange of information.



#### *APFIC web site*

The APFIC secretariat will continue to maintain the APFIC web site. The web site is the principle mechanisms for communicating APFIC information and acts as an archive of the work of the Commission. It is targeted at fishery Professionals in the APFIC member countries and other interested parties about fisheries and aquaculture in Asia-Pacific

#### *APFIC publications*

Publications will remain an important media for information dissemination and exchange. The Biennial publication “Status and trends of fisheries and aquaculture in the Asia and the Pacific 2008” will be finalized following the Thirtieth Session. A subsequent issue will be produced prior to the Thirty-first Session for consideration by the Commission. APFIC secretariat will also publish reviews and up-to-date information on the APFIC selected emerging issues as well as other high profile issues in the region.

#### *Collaboration with internationals/regional bodies*

Promotion of awareness of APFIC activities and to improve communication and coordination with other RFBs and arrangements is one of the advantages of APFIC’s structure and linkage with FAO. The APFIC secretariat will continue to collaborate with other internationals/regional bodies, as appropriate and seek regular contact to share information on emerging issues and opportunities for collaboration.

#### *Monitoring of APFIC’s role*

The Seventy-second Session of the APFIC Executive Committee will review APFIC’s progress in detail and make substantive recommendations on strengthening the role of APFIC for consideration by the 31<sup>st</sup> APFIC Session.

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