FISH for the PEDPLE

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Valuing the Endless Bounty of Aquatic Ecosystem Services



Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center

exploitation of the fisheries resources. At this point in time, it has therefore become necessary that governments recognize such situation and pool their efforts in protecting and conserving the nature's aquatic assets and strive to mainstream in policy-decisions the need to appreciate the full value of the aquatic ecosystem services.

Although it can be said that the Southeast Asian countries are exercising caution in exploiting the resources to ensure that productivity of the aquatic ecosystems is sustained, intensified efforts remain crucial in order that the continued contribution of these ecosystems to human well-being is assured through steady supply of food and adequate livelihood opportunities. The Southeast Asian countries are also becoming much aware of the present condition of the aquatic fisheries resources which may not be sufficient to satisfy the potential increasing demand for food fish while the quantity and quality of the resource being extracted remain degraded. Thus, working hand-in-hand with SEAFDEC, the Southeast Asian countries are now taking great strides to adopt the ecosystem approach to fisheries management to minimize the impacts of fisheries on the environment, and subsequently, to value the significance of aquatic ecosystem services for the well-being of the present and future generations. Correlated with the provisions stipulated in the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region Towards 2020, such endeavors are also meant to correspond to the fundamentals of the ASEAN Economic Community and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, which are expected to take place by 2015.

Meanwhile, our Special Publication Fish for the People had already completed ten years of continued portrayal of the achievements of SEAFDEC and the Southeast Asian countries in implementing two sets of Resolutions and Plans of Action, the first of which was adopted in 2001 while the second in 2011. As the Special Publication enters into its 11th year, it is our wish that more support could be mustered from our audience, clients, patrons, and other stakeholders in order that the contents of the subsequent issues could be enhanced with sustained accounting of regional movements, and that it would be able to continue championing SEAFDEC, as in the past 10 years, in its effort to boost its visibility. -Eds

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most inadequate educational preparations. Nevertheless, the plight of small-scale fishers in Southeast Asia should never be overlooked and should not remain unattended, if they are to continue delivering the amount of fish that could nail the gap between fish supply and demand.

The right time therefore, to put more focus on the socioeconomic development of small-scale fisheries in Southeast Asia, is now! Although considerable attention is now being given to this sub-sector at the global level, e.g. the vision developed by FAO for achieving sustainable development of small-scale fisheries, it is also necessary that a parallel insight be unfolded for the Southeast Asian region. In fact, in an effort to achieve its vision, FAO during the 29th Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) in 2011, agreed to develop the international guidelines on smallseale fisheries that would bring together responsible smallscale fisheries and social development in coastal and inland fishing communities. Being complementary to the global Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the Guidelines could lead national and international efforts in securing the sustainable development of small-scale fisheries and in recognizing the important role that small-scale fisheries play in the overall efforts of eradicating hunger and poverty.

While the final draft of the said guidelines were considered during the Technical Consultation on International Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries convened by FAO in May 2013, SEAFDEC and its Member Countries remain hopeful that the final Guidelines would spell out the need to promote increased awareness and enhanced consideration of the socio-economic conditions as well as the social and economic development needs of the small-scale fisheries sub-sector. Nonetheless, once the Guidelines are adopted by FAO member states, SEAFDEC will consider promoting the implementation of the said Guidelines in the Southeast Asian countries possibly after a process of regionalization. In the course of implementation, SEAFDEC anticipates that the regionalized Guidelines could provide the opportunity for the region's small-scale fishers to find a way out from the quagmire of extreme poverty. More importantly, SEAFDEC also desires to make use of the regionalized Guidelines in crafting the course of action to assess the socio-economic value of small-scale fisheries in Southeast Asia for sustainable development and management.

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Fisheries Governance and Institutional Transformation

Fisheries Governance and Institutional Transformation for Effective Regional Economic Integration



Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center



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to an age-old Chinese proverb "give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime", which in this case could also mean that cooperation among all concerned to attain good governance in fisheries with institutional transformation should be strengthened all the way out and not half-heartedly promoted, in order that lifetime achievement in sustainable fisheries for the benefit of future generations could be attained.

poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources. In fisheries, good governance involves a multi-disciplinary effort where participative mechanism and co-management systems are embedded in such a way that the responsibility to manage the fisheries resources is shared between the government and users especially at the local level. Such effort should however, be reinforced with capacity building to ensure efficient stakeholders' participation in governance, especially the small-scale fishing communities.

SEAFDEC as the technical arm of the ASEAN on fisheries development has been exerting efforts to promote good governance in fisheries in the Southeast Asian region, by calling upon the countries to make institutional reforms based on the Resolution and Plan of Action in order to improve the way their fisheries are managed, monitored and controlled. Through its projects implemented at its Training Department and Marine Fishery Resources Development and Management Department, and with funding from the Japanese Trust Fund as well as from Sweden and other sources, SEAFDEC has been developing measures to eliminate illegal and destructive fishing practices as well as improve the management of fishing capacity to ensure that the fisheries resources remain healthy for the present and future generations. Traceability of fisheries has been championed through the implementation of catch certification and other control measures. In aquaculture, SEAFDEC through its Aquaculture Department, advances the project on Meeting Social and Economic Challenges in Aquaculture with multi-pronged objectives of developing aquaculture technology pathways as means of alleviating poverty in rural areas, addressing inadequacies of human resource to transfer knowledge and practices of sustainable aquaculture technologies from researchers to fish farmers in remote rural communities, and enhancing stakeholders cooperation in promoting aquaculture technologies. SEAFDEC through its newly established Inland Fishery Resources Development and Management Department in Indonesia would also continue to promote the sustainable development of inland capture fisheries focusing on comanagement, as a way of alleviating poverty in rural areas.

These efforts are meant to attain sustainable development of fisheries in the region for effective regional economic integration, and at the same time enable the ASEAN to play the active role of strengthening the ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation as it soars high into its next 40 years and beyond. Nonetheless, the successful promotion of sustainable fisheries would require effective collaborative efforts among stakeholders including research institutions, government agencies, research institutions, funding agencies and collaborating partners, and the resource users, especially the small-scale fishers and fish farmers. On the occasion of the 40th Anniversary of the ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation in December 2013, SEAFDEC expresses the well wishes to the ASEAN and Japan, and calls on all concerned to adhere



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Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries: Perspectives of the Southeast Asian Countries



Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center

Admittedly, the countries have considered IUU fishing as a threat that undermines efforts to conserve and manage fish stocks in both marine and inland capture fisheries, especially spawning negative impacts on the economic, social and ecological aspects of fisheries affecting food security. Therefore, initiatives have been undertaken by the Southeast Asian countries to combat IUU fishing through the promotion of enhanced Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) systems, vessels registration and fisheries licensing, and port monitoring and control, as well as strengthening the regional collaboration for combating IUU fishing in Southeast Asia.

Considering the current situation in fisheries, the countries have been promoting the sustainable management of fishing operations that aim to minimize their impacts on the structure, productivity, function, and biological diversity of the ecosystems, and also ensure that fishing operations are conducted in a manner that does not threaten bycatch species. Moreover, attempts are also being made to avoid mortalities of or injuries to endangered, threatened or protected species during fishing operations, and in general, minimize the impacts of fishing operations on the ecosystems. These are among the major endeavors put forward by the Member Countries with technical assistance from SEAFDEC, in order to boost the realization of the concepts of ecosystems approach to fisheries in the Southeast Asian region.

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