

**REPORT OF THE FORTY-THIRD MEETING OF  
THE COUNCIL OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

**Malacca, Malaysia  
4-8 April 2011**

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**INTRODUCTION**

1. The Forty-third Meeting of the Council of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC) was convened in Malacca, Malaysia from 4 to 8 April 2011, at the invitation of the Department of Fisheries Malaysia of the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry (MOA) Malaysia.
2. The Meeting was attended by the Council Directors for Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam together with their respective delegations, as well as the Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General and the senior officials of SEAFDEC. The Meeting was also attended by representatives from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat, Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) Project, Colombo Plan Secretariat, and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO/RAP). The list of participants appears as **Annex 1**.

**INAUGURAL CEREMONY**

3. The Inaugural Ceremony of the Forty-third Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council was held on 4 April 2011, and was officiated by the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Malaysia, *Dató Mohd Hashim bin Abdullah*.
4. The Director-General of the Department of Livestock and Fisheries and Council Director for Lao PDR, *Dr. Bounkhouang Khambounheuang* in his capacity as the Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Council for 2010-2011, welcomed the participants to the Meeting and expressed the gratitude of the SEAFDEC Council to the Government of Malaysia for hosting the Forty-third Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council and to the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Malaysia and Department of Fisheries Malaysia for the arrangements of the Meeting.
5. While noting that in the case of the new Member Countries of SEAFDEC, the development of their fisheries sector still lags behind those of the original Member Countries, he encouraged SEAFDEC to intensify its efforts in transferring the new technologies and conducting of human resources development to the Member Countries as these are highly needed to enhance the development of fisheries in these countries especially for Lao PDR. He promoted that it should be the ultimate colossal goal of SEAFDEC to reduce the development gaps among the countries in the Southeast Asian region. His Statement appears as **Annex 2**.
6. The Deputy Director-General of the Department of Fisheries Malaysia and SEAFDEC Alternate Council Director for Malaysia *Mr. Ismail bin Abu Hassan*, on behalf of the Director-General of Fisheries and SEAFDEC Council Director for Malaysia *Dató Ahamad Sabki bin Mahmood*, welcomed the participants to the historic City of Malacca considered as the cradle of Malaysian history. He expressed the apology of the Council Director for Malaysia for not being able to attend the Forty-third Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council due to unforeseen circumstances beyond his control.
7. He assured the Meeting that Malaysia will give its utmost support to the activities of SEAFDEC, and expressed his appreciation to SEAFDEC for the assistance extended to Malaysia for the development of the country's fisheries industry and especially in addressing the emerging international fisheries related issues. He also encouraged the participants to visit the historical sites of Malacca and expressed the hope

for the successful Meeting of the Council Directors of SEAFDEC. His Welcome Address appears as **Annex 3**.

8. The Secretary-General of the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Malaysia, *Dató Mohd Hashim bin Abdullah* welcomed the participants to the historic city of Malacca and commended SEAFDEC for making significant strides in ensuring food security for the present and future generations of the Southeast Asian region. He emphasized that fisheries is an important sector in the development of Malaysia as well as in other countries in the region considering that fish is the main source of protein of the peoples in the region. Specifically for Malaysia, the fisheries sector provides employment to more than 100,000 people who are directly involved in fisheries and aquaculture activities, and that fish is a major commodity considered under the country's Economic Transformation Program since the fishing industry is perceived to have potentials for development into a high income generating industry.

9. He added that the trade of fish and fishery products is very vital for the improvement of the economies in the region. With the importing countries imposing more requirements especially on food safety and traceability, it is necessary that the countries in the region comply with such requirements in order to gain access to the international markets. Although such requirements could be seen as obstacles in developing the fisheries industry, he encouraged the countries in the region to take serious look at such requirements as means of improving the respective country's production systems.

10. Finally, he expressed his appreciation to SEAFDEC for its assistance to the Member Countries especially in addressing the emerging international fisheries-related issues especially on fish safety and quality, measures to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, the regulations of trading of live fish in accordance with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and the promotion of sustainable fisheries management. He also acknowledged the efforts of SEAFDEC in developing the human resource capability of the countries in the region especially in Malaysia where the officers trained by SEAFDEC have shown high standard of competence. He then declared the Meeting open. His Opening Speech appears as **Annex 4**.

## I. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

### 1.1 Opening of the Meeting

11. The Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Council for the year 2010-2011, *Dr. Bounkhouang Khambounheuang* welcomed the participants to the Meeting. Before proceeding with other procedural matters, he expressed the sympathy on behalf of the SEAFDEC Council of Directors to the victims of the earthquake and subsequent Tsunami that struck the northeastern coast of Japan on 11 March 2011, and also to the people of Myanmar who had been affected by a destructive earthquake on 24 March 2011. He then invited the participants to observe a Moment of Silence for the victims of the devastating calamities in Japan and in Myanmar.

### 1.2 Election of the Chairperson for 2011-2012

12. The Council Director for Malaysia, *Dató Ahamad Sabki bin Mahmood* was unanimously elected Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Council for 2011-2012, in accordance with Article 5, paragraph 4 of the Agreement Establishing SEAFDEC.

13. On behalf of *Dató Ahamad Sabki bin Mahmood*, the Alternate Council Director for Malaysia *Mr. Ismail bin Abu Hassan*, thanked the Council Directors for the opportunity given to the Council Director for Malaysia to serve as the Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Council. He commended *Dr. Bounkhouang Khambounheuang*, the Council Director for Lao PDR for his excellent chairmanship of the SEAFDEC Council from 2010 to 2011, which has enabled SEAFDEC to steer towards its goal in promoting sustainable fisheries development in the region, and paved the way for strengthening its activities that aim to enhance the contribution of fisheries to food security and alleviation of poverty in the region. He added that 2011 would be a significant year for SEAFDEC considering that the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference in June 2011 is expected to adopt the new decade Resolution and Plan of Action that would serve as

policy framework for the sustainable development of SEAFDEC during the next decade. He added that there are several issues that should be addressed which could have great impact to the fisheries sector of the region especially those that impede the sustainable development of fisheries, and which would need the guidance of the Council at this Meeting. His Opening Remarks appear as **Annex 5**.

### **1.3 Adoption of the Agenda**

14. The Council adopted the Agenda of the Meeting, which appears as **Annex 6**.

## **II. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

15. The Secretary-General of SEAFDEC congratulated the Council Director for Malaysia *Dató Ahamad Sabki bin Mahmood* for having been elected as the Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Council for 2011-2012, and expressed his appreciation to the Council Director for Lao PDR *Dr. Bounkhouang Khambounheuang*, for his chairmanship of the Council for 2010-2011 and for leading the Council Directors towards providing SEAFDEC with the directives and guidance during the past year. As requested by the Secretary-General, the Council also approved the appointment of *Dr. Endhay Kusnendar Kontara* of the Agency of Marine and Fisheries Research and Development as the new Council Director for Indonesia.

16. The Council commended the SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments for the continued efforts in promoting sustainable fisheries development in the Southeast Asian region, as indicated in the report presented by the SEAFDEC Secretary-General *Dr. Chumnarn Pongsri*, and approved the SEAFDEC Annual Report 2010 for publication and dissemination.

17. The Council Director for Indonesia, while congratulating SEAFDEC for the activities undertaken in 2010, also reiterated the areas of importance in the region, which should be given more focus by SEAFDEC. These include: 1) sustainable management measures for highly migratory stocks; 2) conservation of endangered species and enhancement of stocks in the region; 3) strengthening collaboration among Member Countries in the implementation of Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices (Including Combating IUU Fishing) in the Region; 4) reduction of the use of illegal fishing practices; 5) strengthening regional collaboration on fish disease in the region; and 6) enhancing the utilization of freshwater fishery resources in the region.

18. The Council Director for Japan commented that SEAFDEC has made progress in the implementation of activities during the past decade, of which the activities were well recognized through the SEAFDEC Newsletter and the Special Publication "Fish for the People". He then suggested that SEAFDEC should continue the implementation of its activities along this line for the benefit of the countries in the region.

19. The Council Director for Lao PDR, while expressing the appreciation to SEAFDEC for undertaking more activities focusing on inland fisheries during the past year, requested that activities along this line should be continued. He also requested the Chairperson of the SEAFDEC Council for the year 2011-2012 to further guide SEAFDEC to continue implementing activities that would also focus on inland fisheries in the future.

20. The Council Director for Myanmar expressed his appreciation for the assistance extended by SEAFDEC to Myanmar, particularly on human resources development in aquaculture and fish disease surveillance system, and would look forward to closer cooperation with SEAFDEC in the future.

21. The Council Director for the Philippines while congratulating SEAFDEC for the activities undertaken during the past year expressed the concern that the results from some of the projects implemented by SEAFDEC Departments were not fully extended to the Member Countries. Although the Philippines and its local government units have established mechanism to closely collaborate with AQD, there are still some constraints in working with the other SEAFDEC Departments, particularly in the aspect of marine fisheries. He added that despite the Philippines' membership in several regional fisheries

management organizations (RFMOs), the country still lacks technical expertise and information. In this regard, he requested SEAFDEC to consider conducting additional regional research in marine fisheries. He also recommended that since SEAFDEC has undertaken a number of research projects on marine fisheries in the past, a mechanism should be established by SEAFDEC in close coordination with Member Countries to transfer the technologies and information in order that these could be fully utilized by the Member Countries. In this regard, he also suggested that the Member Countries could help in sharing the costs for transferring such technologies to the end users.

22. The Alternate Council Director for Singapore on behalf of the Council Director for Singapore congratulated SEAFDEC for the activities it had undertaken, particularly those that addressed the priority issues confronting the fishery sector, *e.g.* trade requirements for exporting fish and fishery products to the European Union (EU) and other countries such as trade certification and traceability schemes to ensure that fisheries activities are undertaken in responsible manner and complying with IUU and Port State Measures. She recommended that information on technologies and other outputs from SEAFDEC activities should be packaged and disseminated to maximize the benefits gained and utilization by the Member Countries. In addition, taking into consideration the limited budget, the conduct of activities should be prioritized based on the needs and requirements of the countries in the region. In particular, she commended SEAFDEC for undertaking activities that respond to the proposed listing of several shark species in the CITES Appendices and requested SEAFDEC to continue its effort along this area especially in providing fora for the formulation of common/coordinated positions by the countries in the region to address the issues.

23. The Council Director for Thailand requested SEAFDEC to continue its research and development activities on fishing gears in the high sea areas; study on climate change and its impacts of which geographic information system and satellite data could be integrated; and developing standards for the hygiene of vessels and fishing ports to comply with requirements of importing countries, among others. In addition, she also supported the activities of SEAFDEC that address the importance of freshwater fisheries in the region.

24. After reviewing the progress made by SEAFDEC in 2010 as reflected in the SEAFDEC Annual Report 2010, the other Council Directors took the opportunity of expressing the deepest sympathy of their respective governments to the Government of Japan on the earthquake and tsunami that struck the country on 11 March 2011 and to the Government of Myanmar on the earthquake that struck part of the country on 24 March 2011 that resulted in loss of lives, properties and livelihoods, and expressed the hope that Japan and Myanmar would be able to rehabilitate soon from the destructions brought about by such calamities.

### **III. NOTE OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE SEAFDEC PROGRAM COMMITTEE ON THE RESULT OF THE THIRTY-THIRD MEETING**

25. The Council took note of the outcome of the Thirty-third Meeting of the Program Committee of SEAFDEC (**Annex 7**) held from 30 November to 2 December 2010 in Bangkok, Thailand, as presented by the Secretary-General in his capacity as Chairperson of the Program Committee. While noting the programs implemented by SEAFDEC in 2010, the Council also approved the proposed programs for 2011 as well as the recommendations made at the Program Committee Meeting for future implementation.

26. In the conduct of research and training activities, the Council Director for Brunei Darussalam recommended that the SEAFDEC Departments should avail of the information and experiences gained by other countries in the region. Specifically for the conduct of research on disease control and hatchery management of catfish (*Clarias batrachus*), AQD could learn from the experience of Vietnam to avoid duplication of efforts. In response to this, the Council Director for Vietnam expressed willingness of the country to share its experience in catfish breeding and hatchery management with AQD and to the other countries in the region.

27. While supporting the programs implemented by SEAFDEC, the Council Director for Japan reiterated that in 2011 a new project that covers a wide range of activities including those of combating

IUU fishing would be implemented by SEAFDEC with funding support from the Japanese Trust Fund. In this regard, he encouraged the Member Countries to provide support and collaborate with SEAFDEC Secretariat and Departments in the implementation of the project.

28. The Council Director for Lao PDR while also supporting the activities implemented by SEAFDEC reiterated that more focus should be given on capacity building in freshwater fisheries and aquaculture in cooperation with the Mekong River Commission (MRC).

29. The Council Director for Malaysia suggested that the new programs under the FCG/ASSP addressing IUU fishing should be considered from the regional point of view and that sharing of information on the countermeasures on IUU fishing should be promoted. In addition, he suggested that SEAFDEC should seek funding support for the implementation of the project on safety at sea for small fishing boats which should focus on the development of the guidelines for the safety of small fishing boats.

30. The Council Director for Myanmar supported the project on mud crab resource enhancement in the coastal areas, and acknowledged the assistance of AQD on the seed production of mud crab although the country is still not successful in producing quality seeds. He also suggested that AQD should intensify its efforts in transferring mud crab seed production technology considering that mud crab is an economically-important commodity in the region. In connection with the need for human resource development (HRD) focusing on food safety standards for fish and fishery products exported to EU and other countries, he suggested that information on the fishery resources should be assessed and compiled by SEAFDEC for dissemination to the Member Countries for better management of their resources.

31. The Council Director for Philippines reiterated that for transparency of the implementation of the programs and activities, SEAFDEC should conduct an evaluation of its programs and activities, the results of which should be disseminated to the Member Countries.

32. On the program of AQD on Food Safety of Aquaculture Products in Southeast Asia, the Council Director for Singapore commented that the activities should complement with the ASEAN program specifically on the development of the Guidelines for the Use of Chemicals in Aquaculture. In response, AQD clarified that through the said program scientific inputs had been provided by AQD to Malaysia as Lead Country in the implementation of activity on the Harmonization of Guidelines for the Use of Chemicals in Aquaculture and Measures to Eliminate the Use of Harmful Chemicals under the ASWGFi framework.

33. The Council Director for Thailand requested MFRD to give more emphasis on food safety, laboratory and hygiene in its programs. In addition, she encouraged AQD to implement regional human resources activities, *e.g.* training, study visit, and joint research among Member Countries in aquaculture and related activities. While reiterating the importance of the adaptation and mitigation measures of climate change and its effect on fisheries and aquaculture, the Council Director for Thailand suggested that this issue should be considered high priority by SEAFDEC and requested SEAFDEC to focus its activities on the adaptation measures that could mitigate the impact of climate change on small-scale fisheries. She also encouraged SEAFDEC to conduct joint research on climate change adaptation and mitigation in the region incorporating geographical information system technology, and come up with surveillance and monitoring measures in mitigating the impacts of climate change in the region.

34. With regards to the project on Traceability Systems for Aquaculture Products in the ASEAN Region conducted by MFRD, the Council Director for Vietnam recommended that the project should put more emphasis on the certification scheme in aquaculture. In addition, she also requested SEAFDEC to consider providing assistance in the development of a national statistical system for Vietnam.

35. As for the status of the proposal on Climate Change and Adaptation which was jointly prepared by AQD and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), the Council was informed that the proposal was presented by AQD for the information of the participants during the Regional Technical Consultation on International Fisheries-related Issues in January 2011. Moreover, the Council was also

informed that the proposal would be submitted by the Philippines as Lead Country for Climate Change under the ASEAN Fisheries Consultative Forum (AFCF) to the 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ASWGFi on 27-29 April 2011.

#### **IV. NOTE OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FISHERIES CONSULTATIVE GROUP (FCG) OF THE ASEAN-SEAFDEC STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (ASSP) ON THE RESULT OF THE THIRTEENTH MEETING**

36. The Council took note of the results and endorsed the recommendations of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Fisheries Consultative Group of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (FCG/ASSP), which was held from 3-4 December 2010 in Bangkok, Thailand (**Annex 8**), as presented by Ms. *Hajah Hasnah Ibrahim*, the Council Director for Brunei Darussalam in her capacity as the ASEAN Co-Chair of the FCG/ASSP.

37. The Council noted the request made by Thailand as the interim Secretariat of AFCF with regards to the preparations for the forthcoming meeting of the AFCF scheduled on 26 April 2011. Specifically, information on the progress in the implementation of activities under the key clusters of the AFCF should be submitted by the respective cluster's lead country as well as by SEAFDEC to Thailand by 15 April 2011. The Council also noted that the outcomes of the ASEAN Shrimp Alliance Annual Meeting which was organized on 9 March 2011 would also be reported to the 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASWGFi scheduled on 27-29 April 2011.

#### **V. POLICY CONSIDERATION ON IMPORTANT ISSUES**

##### **5.1 International Fisheries-related Issues and Emerging Issues in Response to the Requests of the Council.**

38. The Council was informed on the updated information and regional positions on the important international fisheries-related issues which have been identified during the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the FCG/ASSP (3-4 December 2010, Bangkok, Thailand) and subsequently discussed at the Regional Technical Consultation on the International Fisheries-related Issues (18-20 January 2011) as summarized in the Executive Report on International Fisheries-related Issues (2010-2011) which appears as **Annex 9**. The Council took note of the priority issues which included: 1) the Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification; 2) Measures Against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU Fishing); 3) Quality and Safety Issues in International Trade; 4) Small-scale Fisheries; 5) Fisheries Subsidies; 6) CITES Issues; 7) Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation; and 8) Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries and Aquaculture.

39. Regarding the FAO Technical Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification which was adopted at the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of COFI in January 2011, the Council Director for Vietnam suggested that SEAFDEC should support the Member Countries in the implementation of the Guidelines by developing the Regional Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification. In this connection, the Council Director for Thailand informed the Council that along the line with the development of the FAO Guidelines on Aquaculture Certification, the ASEAN Shrimp GAP has been developed taking into consideration the provisions in the Guidelines.

40. With regards to measures against IUU fishing, the Council Director for Indonesia encouraged all Member Countries to enhance their capacity on the implementation of the Port State Measures to eliminate IUU fishing as well as to develop measures to mitigate the impacts of climate change to the livelihoods of people in the region relying on the fisheries resources for their socio-economic well-being.

41. In response to the request of the Member Countries, the Council Director for Malaysia informed the Council that Malaysia is willing to share the information and its experience on the implementation of the EC Regulation 1005/2008 following the recent evaluation mission by EU to Malaysia.

42. On Global Record for Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels, the Council Director for Vietnam suggested that the scope of application of the Global Record should cover

vessels in international waters, and sought for the common position of the Member Countries in this regard. In addition, the Council Director for Thailand informed the Council that during the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of COFI, Thailand raised the issue on the Unique Vessel Identification (UVI) which should cover only vessels in high sea areas considering that the registration of vessels operating in the EEZs should be the responsibility of the flag states.

43. The Representative from the FAO/RAP clarified that the Global Record would not replace but only try to complement the existing national or regional vessel registration systems. However, the national and regional records would be essential in maintaining the integrity of the new Global Record and to its international focus. He also informed the Council that the Global Record includes all fishing vessels greater than or equal to 10 GT (gross tonnage), 10 GRT (gross register tonnage) or 12 meters length overall (LOA), regardless of where such vessels operate, *i.e.* waters under national jurisdictions or the high seas. In this regard, he provided the comprehensive information on the Global Record to the countries in the region as shown in **Annex 10**, and requested SEAFDEC to share the information to the Member Countries.

44. With regards to quality and safety issues in international trade, the Council Director for Malaysia suggested that all ASEAN countries should consider establishing a strong collaborative mechanism through SEAFDEC such as upgrading the instruments used for testing the parameters that are required by importing countries in order to ensure the quality and safety of fish and fisheries products.

45. The Council Director for Thailand added that although several trade-related requirements by importing countries could be considered as technical barriers to trade, the Member Countries should actively participate in the relevant WTO fora to safeguard the countries' benefit. In addition, the Member Countries should also enhance the establishment of the Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) in order to facilitate trade between and among the countries.

46. With regards to fisheries subsidies that had been discussed during the World Trade Organization (WTO) round of negotiations, the Council Director for Vietnam requested SEAFDEC to establish a mechanism of compiling information on activities related to fisheries subsidies in the region to enable the countries to immediately respond to and address the requirements of the new Chairperson of the Negotiation Group on Rules (NGRs).

47. The Council Director of Malaysia informed the Council on the latest development of the ongoing fisheries subsidies negotiations at the WTO. In view of the need for issuing a new text in May of 2011, the Chair of the NGRs had launched an intensive round of negotiations in early 2011 which was concluded early of this month. He added that Malaysia had been invited to several plurilateral sessions which deliberated on the issues of fuel subsidies, small-scale fisheries, high seas fisheries, fisheries management, income support, and shared stocks. In addition, Malaysia had submitted a textual proposal which was drafted based on Article II (General Exception) of the Chair's 2007 Text. The proposal demanded for the exception of vessel modification and upgrading in meeting food safety and hygiene standards which otherwise should have been prohibited under Article I.1 (a) of the Chair's 2007 Text. He also informed the Council that Malaysia had gained wide support from both the developing and developed countries and thanked SEAFDEC Member Countries for their support during the negotiations in Geneva. In this connection, the Council Director for Malaysia encouraged the Member Countries who were not invited to the plurilateral session to examine the Chair's Transparency Report for clarity, and also urged the Member Countries to request their respective Missions in Geneva to register their e-mail addresses with the NGRs Secretariat to be able to keep abreast of all the activities and development relating to the negotiations.

48. With regards to the issues relevant to CITES, the Council Director for Japan informed the Council that the proposed listing in the CITES Appendices included only the economically-important species, and that in the new proposed list the number of commercial aquatic exploited-species could be increased. In this regard, SEAFDEC was requested to identify the technical problems on CITES faced by all Member Countries and provide the information to the CITES Secretariat to make them aware of the situation and concerns of the Member Countries before the COP16- CITES.

## **5.2 Human Resources Development Gaps and Requirements for ASEAN Member Countries**

49. The Council was informed on the results of the Study on Human Resources Development Gaps and Requirements for the ASEAN Member Countries which appears as **Annex 11**.

50. In this regard, the Council recommended that in order to support human capacity development for the Member Countries, SEAFDEC should mobilize the existing collaboration with research and development institutions and relevant organizations in exchanging expertise to assist the Member Countries for the development of their respective human resources. In addition, Member Countries having more expertise in some specific areas should consider providing special training to other countries. SEAFDEC was also requested to consider conducting special training on required subjects by mobilizing experts within the region or inviting the experts from outside the region.

51. The Council Director for Malaysia, while agreeing with the recommendations from the study, expressed the concern that the outputs from the survey in Malaysia may not truly reflect the status of the availability and gaps of human resources in the country due to certain difficulties in responding to the questionnaire brought about by the insufficient description of the scope the subjects. In this connection, SEAFDEC informed the Council that the study is only a preliminary survey to obtain indicative figures on the availability and gaps of human resources in the region in various scopes and subjects of fisheries, and that the outcomes from the survey were based on the information provided by the Member Countries although the results may not have fully reflected the whole picture of the available expertise in the countries. However, the Council was also further informed that the results of the survey demonstrated a certain trend that in some countries most experts in certain subjects are almost in the retirement age and that there is a need to intensify the engagement of younger recruits.

52. The Council Director for Cambodia also supported the outputs of the study, and suggested that as the study has indicated gaps in human resources in certain subjects of fisheries in the region, development of human resources capability particularly for young generation, should be enhanced. In this connection, he requested SEAFDEC to come up with activities to enhance the human capacity of the countries in fisheries, particularly on the areas related to the emerging issues and challenges.

## **5.3 Regional Policy Recommendations on Poverty Alleviation by Fisheries Intervention**

53. The Council took note of the achievements in the implementation of the Program on “Human Resource Development (HRD) for Poverty Alleviation and Food Security by Fisheries Intervention in the ASEAN Region” which was funded by the ASEAN Foundation through the ASEAN-Japan Solidarity Fund (**Annex 12**). While considering the proposed Regional Policy Recommendations on Poverty Alleviation by Fisheries Intervention as output of the Program, the Council Director for Cambodia informed the Council that in the case of Cambodia, fisheries management in the country as well as rules and regulations are now being implemented at the local level through the establishment of Community Fisheries (CFs). Through the mechanism of the 500 or more CFs in the country, the participation of the local fisheries communities in fisheries resource management has been promoted.

54. However, since some CFs need assistance in the development of their respective management plans, he suggested that training of trainers should be promoted following the approach of the HRD Program to enhance the capacity of the members of the Community Fisheries in developing and implementing their respective resource management plans. He added that capacity building for the members of CFs could focus on understanding the importance of fish refuge and sanctuary in deep pools which are critical for fish spawning and on resource enhancement of marine grounds through the installation of artificial reefs, although the specific training activities could be formulated based on the needs of the CFs in order to encourage the active participation of the members of the CFs.

55. The Council Director for the Philippines while supporting the Program on HRD informed the Council that empowering the fisheries communities in the country has been done through the establishment of the Fisheries and Aquatic Resource Management Council (FARMC) as well as that of

fisherfolks organizations. He also informed the Council that the country encourages fisherfolks to obtain hands-on experience on the management of fishery resources through the government program launched during the annual celebration of the farmers and fisherfolks month in May. Under this program, representatives from the fisherfolk organizations are allowed to take charge of the offices of BFAR from the central to the local levels, after which the fisherfolk representatives would be able to provide information on the status of the development of fisheries management to their respective areas.

56. The Council Director for Indonesia noted the achievements of the Program on HRD and encouraged all Member Countries to consider enhancing the development of their human resources to alleviate poverty which should be one of the main goals of sustainable fisheries management.

57. After the discussion, the Council endorsed the Regional Policy Recommendations on Poverty Alleviation by Fisheries Intervention in Southeast Asia, which will be submitted to ASWGF<sub>i</sub> on 27-29 April 2011 for endorsement. The Council was informed that SEAFDEC will incorporate the valuable comments from the Council in the development of the National Guidelines on Poverty Alleviation by Fisheries Intervention once the Regional Policy Recommendations is endorsed by the ASWGF<sub>i</sub>.

## **VI. ASEAN-SEAFDEC CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES TOWARDS 2020 “FISH FOR THE PEOPLE 2020: ADAPTATION TO A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT”**

### **6.1 Progress Report**

58. The Council took note of the progress made by the ASEAN, SEAFDEC and the Department of Fisheries of Thailand in the preparation for the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security Towards 2020 “Fish for the People 2020: Adaptation to a Changing Environment” (**Annex 13**) scheduled on 13-17 June 2011 in Bangkok, Thailand.

59. The Council was informed on the participation of the Member Countries to the Technical Session of the Conference wherein five delegates from each ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Country would be fully supported using the budget allocated by the ASEAN Foundation. In addition, SEAFDEC would also be responsible for the cost of the participation of resource persons to the Technical Session of the Conference. However, it was clarified that for the participation of additional participants from the Member Countries, the participants should register and pay the corresponding registration fees in accordance with the registration policy of the Conference.

60. The Council Director for Myanmar informed the Council on the willingness of the Fisheries Federation of Myanmar to participate in the Conference on its own expense, and requested the SEAFDEC Secretariat to issue the invitation letter accordingly as soon as possible.

61. The Council Director for Thailand, as the host government of the Conference, informed the Council that Thailand would issue the invitation letter for the participation of the Senior Officials and Ministers in the Senior Officials Plus Three Meeting (SOM Plus Three), the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), and the Ministerial Meeting as soon as possible but not later than 15 April 2011. The letter will include the agenda and detailed arrangements for the Meetings. In the invitation letters for the Ministers, Thailand would also inquire whether the Ministers of respective countries would wish to deliver Remarks during the Ministerial Meeting for appropriate time allocation. The Council also noted that Thailand would be responsible for the expenditures of the Ministers including accommodation, domestic transportation arrangements, and other hospitality arrangements, and the meeting costs for the SOM and Ministerial Session. However, the respective ASEAN-SEAFDEC Countries would be responsible for other expenses of their respective Senior Officials and other participants to the SOM and the Ministerial Session.

62. The Representative from the ASEAN Secretariat, *Ms. Pouchamarn Wongsanga* provided additional information on the organization of the Preparatory Meeting for the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference on 25 April 2011 in Siem Reap, Cambodia to finalize important issues, particularly the agenda and arrangements for the SOM Plus Three, SOM and Ministerial Session, the Final Draft

Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region Towards 2020, and the Concept Note to support the implementation of the Plan of Action. She also informed the Council that the Final Draft Resolution and Plan of Action reviewed at this Council Meeting would be submitted to the 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASWGFi for consideration and approval before further endorsement by the SOM and Ministers, respectively; while the Concept Note would be endorsed by the ASWGFi.

## **6.2 Draft Resolution and Plan of Action**

63. The Council took note of the Draft Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region Towards 2020, which was discussed during the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Consultation on Drafting the Resolution and Plan of Action organized on 21-23 February 2011 with further refinements by the ASEAN Secretariat, and circulated to the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries in early March 2011 for consideration and comments. After the discussion, the Council agreed on the amendments made to the Draft Resolution and Plan of Action as shown in **Annex 14**. However, the Council Directors for Singapore and Thailand made reservations on the use of the term “Ensure” in paragraph 43 under Section C on Aquaculture, and suggested that this term be changed to “Encourage”.

64. The Council was informed that the amendments and the comments made by the SEAFDEC Council Meeting would be conveyed to the 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ASWGFi for consideration and for subsequent accommodation into the Final Draft Resolution and Plan of Action.

## **VII. COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL/REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND NON-MEMBER GOVERNMENTS**

65. The Council took note of the collaborative activities in 2010 between SEAFDEC and other regional/international organizations as well as with the non-member governments under the existing collaborative agreements, which include the collaboration with: the ASEAN Foundation; Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN); Fishery Research Agency (FRA), Japan; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); Hokkaido University, Japan; National Agriculture Training Council (NATC), Malaysia; National Fisheries University (NFU), Japan; United Soybean Board, USA; and Vocational Education Commission of Thailand.

66. The Council also noted the collaborating partners for the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference which include: the Mekong River Commission (MRC); Asian Institute of Technology (AIT); Network of Aquaculture Centers in Asia-Pacific (NACA); WorldFish Center; Coastal Development Center of Kasetsart University, Thailand; Fisheries Research Agency (FRA), Japan; Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS); Tokyo University of Marine Sciences and Technology (TUMSAT), Japan; Faculty of Fisheries of Kagoshima University, Japan; School of Marine Science and Technology of Tokai University (TUMST), Japan; Hiroshima University, Japan; Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN), Japan; and Marine Institute (MI) of the Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada.

67. The Council Director for Malaysia suggested that in order for the Member Countries to maximize the benefits from the collaborative activities, SEAFDEC should provide more detailed information related to collaborative arrangements between SEAFDEC and other organizations to enable the Member Countries to participate in such activities. In this connection, the Council was informed that the collaborative activities are usually planned and undertaken in an *ad-hoc* manner and most of the activities are aimed at enhancing the capacity of staff from both institutions on specific aspects of mutual interest. However, SEAFDEC would try to keep the Member Countries informed on the activities and for them to be involved in the activities where applicable and possible.

### **7.1 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

68. The Representative from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations/Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (FAO/RAP), *Dr. Simon Funge-Smith* expressed his appreciation for the

invitation extended by SEAFDEC and to the Department of Fisheries Malaysia and the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Malaysia for their excellent arrangements and the hospitality during the Council Meeting in Malacca, Malaysia. He reaffirmed that SEAFDEC has been playing an important role as a regional capacity building body in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors in the Southeast Asian region and importantly, the increasing role of SEAFDEC as a regional technical advisory body to the ASEAN.

69. Specifically, he informed the Council that FAO is pleased to be able to provide technical support to the forthcoming Conference in June 2011 and the associated ASEAN Resolution and Plan of Action, and the concrete cooperation between FAO and SEAFDEC in the development of a five-year regional Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project for the management of fisheries by-catch and discards. Moreover, he also informed the Council that FAO would be able to collaborate closely with SEAFDEC in addressing the needs for capacity building and technical expertise of the SEAFDEC Member Countries in: the management of by-catch, capacity building on Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries/Aquaculture, the small pelagic fish program, regional shark management planning, sub-regional fishery management plans in the South China Sea and Bay of Bengal, and improved reporting of the status and trends of fisheries in the region. He added that FAO also expressed interest in cooperating with SEAFDEC on other associated areas such as the development of the Global Record of fishing vessels, capacity building related to climate change adaptation, traceability of fishery and aquaculture products, and management of inland fisheries.

70. He also took the opportunity to inform the Council on the two APFIC regional consultative workshops scheduled for 2011, namely: the Regional Workshop on Climate Change and Adaptation in Fisheries and Aquaculture in the Asian Region and the Use of Fisheries Assessments for Management would largely benefit from the regional inputs of SEAFDEC. His statement appears as **Annex 15**.

## **7.2 ASEAN Secretariat**

71. The Representative from the ASEAN Secretariat congratulated SEAFDEC for the achievements made in 2010, and reiterated the ASEAN Leaders' decision in realizing an ASEAN Community in 2015 of which fisheries would form an important part of it. She stressed the importance of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership and highlighted on the upcoming ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security Towards 2020 "Fish for the People 2020: Adaptation to a Changing Environment" to be organized on 13-17 June 2011, as the key cooperation with SEAFDEC under the ASSP collaborative mechanism. She emphasized that the "Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region Towards 2020" as outcome from the Ministerial Meeting of the Conference would be the new strategic plan for the fisheries sector of the region. She thanked the SEAFDEC Council for its continued cooperation with the ASEAN and assured the Council of the strong interest in and any possible support to the close collaboration and partnership with SEAFDEC. Her Statement appears as **Annex 16**.

## **7.3 The Colombo Plan**

72. The Representative from the Colombo Plan, *Ms. Devika Karunaratne* expressed her gratitude to SEAFDEC and the Department of Fisheries Malaysia for extending the invitation for the Colombo Plan Secretariat to attend the 43<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council. She gave a brief overview of the Colombo Plan's collaboration with international organizations and specifically recognized the potential of the SEAFDEC approach on One Village One Fisheries Product (FOVOP) which can contribute towards the poverty alleviation projects of the Colombo Plan in its Member Countries. In this light, the Colombo Plan would like to propose the implementation in 2011 of the Training Workshop on Promotion of "One-Village One-Fisheries Product" for the developing member countries of the Colombo Plan. She reiterated that the collaboration could be an opportunity for both organizations to discuss issues and considerations in the promotion of One Village One Fisheries Products which will help uplift the living standards in fishing communities in the Colombo Plan developing member countries (**Annex 17**).

## **7.4 The Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) Project**

73. The Representative from the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) Project, *Dr. Chris O'Brien* gave a brief background and update of the BOBLME Project. He informed the Council that the countries under the Project include: Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, and that the Project receives funding support from GEF, Norway, Sweden, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the USA, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) with FAO as the executing agency.

74. He added that the major output of the Project is the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) that identifies, quantifies and ranks water-related environmental transboundary issues and their causes according to the severity of the environmental and/or socio-economic impacts. Moreover, the Project has an ambitious program of work and is seeking to collaborate with the SEAFDEC Member Countries and Departments in areas that include: ecosystem surveys, improving fisheries statistics in terms of training, understanding the implications of climate change, analysis of historical data, small pelagic fisheries, national plan of action (NPOA) on sharks and regional plan of action, supporting sub-regional collaboration, and implementing a framework for the ecosystem approach to fisheries. His statement appears as **Annex 18**.

## VIII. OTHER MATTERS

### 8.1 Ecopath Trophic Model for the Matang Mangrove Estuary, Malaysia

75. The Council took note of the report of the JIRCAS-DOF Malaysia collaborative study on Ecopath Trophic Model for the Matang Mangrove Estuary, Malaysia (**Annex 19**) which was aimed at developing appropriate technology for sustainable development and management of the fisheries resources. The conclusion and recommendations of the study could serve as basis for the development and refinement of fisheries management plan for ecosystem approach to fisheries of the countries in the region.

### 8.2 Statement by the Government of Japan

76. On behalf of the Council Director for Japan, *Mr. Masanori Miyahara*, the head delegate for Japan *Mr. Kazuo Hiraishi* expressed his sincere gratitude to SEAFDEC and its Member Countries for their strong support by expressing consolation to Japan after the northeastern part of country was hit by the devastation earthquake and subsequent tsunami on 11 March 2011. The two calamities have resulted in enormous loss of lives and livelihoods including destruction of fishing port facilities, fishing boats and most importantly livelihood of fishing villages. He informed the Council that at present, the country is in the initial phase of recovery, giving precedence to supporting evacuees while investigating the situation of the devastated area however, it could not still be envisaged how much cost would be required and when the recovery would be overcome.

77. He also informed the Council that SEAFDEC has made significant achievements in its efforts towards sustainable fisheries development in the Southeast Asian region. Since SEAFDEC would soon have a new policy framework and direction for the next coming decade as output from the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Ministerial Meeting in June 2011, Japan is still willing to continue supporting SEAFDEC onwards as far as advanced efforts would be required. His statement appears as **Annex 20**.

## IX. FUTURE DIRECTION REQUESTED BY THE COUNCIL (CLOSED SESSION)

78. The Secretary-General reported on the progress made by SEAFDEC (**Annex 21**) in response to the request made by the Council during the 42<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council in Lao PDR in 2010.

### 9.1 Review of the Operations of SEAFDEC

79. With a view to improve the operations of SEAFDEC, the Secretary-General of SEAFDEC proposed the organization of the Third SEAFDEC Review Committee (**Annex 22**) while the Council Director for Singapore proposed the Review of the SEAFDEC Agreement and Plan of Operations of

SEAFDEC Departments (**Annex 23**). The Council Directors discussed these proposals at length, and while agreeing to have the Third Review on the roles and functions of SEAFDEC, the Council requested the Secretary-General to communicate with the National Coordinators of the respective countries to compile the information on the countries' views on the activities of SEAFDEC. In addition, the Council also requested SEAFDEC to incorporate in the report other relevant documents/information as outlined in **Annex 24**.

80. The Council requested that the Report should be completed within six months after the Council Meeting, and the results should be circulated to the SEAFDEC Council Directors by *ad referendum* to obtain feedback and further guidance from the Council. SEAFDEC will then accommodate such feedback and submit the final report to the Council Directors also by *ad referendum*. The report would be tabled for discussion and further directives from the Council during its Forty-fourth Meeting in 2012.

## **X. SEAFDEC FUTURE OPERATIONS**

### **10.1 Adjustment of Minimum Regular Contribution (MRC)**

81. The Council took note of the SEAFDEC Future Operation: Progress and Consideration on the Minimum Regular Contribution (MRC) which appears as **Annex 25**. The Council also noted the priority issues for the future operation of SEAFDEC that would require budgetary allocation from the MRC, which include: 1) Sustainability of the SEAFDEC Special Publication "Fish for the People"; 2) Sustainability of the Regional Fisheries Policy Network (RFPN); 3) Sustainability of the Working Groups under the Regional Advisory Committee (RAC); 4) Sustainability of the operation and maximizing the utilization of the M.V. SEAFDEC 2; and 5) Other Priority Areas/Activities urgently required by the Member Countries.

82. The Council Director for Thailand expressed the view that due to the circumstance of high inflation rate and the devaluation of the US dollars by 25%, the budget of SEAFDEC would be limited and SEAFDEC would face difficulties in its operation and management as mandated by the Council. It is therefore necessary to increase the budget of SEAFDEC otherwise its future operation would not be successful and sustainable. She therefore supported the proposal on increasing the amount of MRC.

83. While taking note the proposed adjustment of the MRC, the Council Director for Singapore requested SEAFDEC to revise the MRC of Singapore in the proposal which should be 13,000US\$. She also informed the Council that Singapore would follow the consensus of the Council regarding the proposed adjustment of the MRC.

84. The Council Director for Indonesia commented that increasing the budget of the Secretariat is understandable, but the increase should be kept at minimum. He expressed the apprehension that the adjustment of the MRC for Indonesia is not acceptable and it would be difficult to justify the increase to its Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He also suggested that in the calculation of the MRC, gross domestic product (GDP) of fisheries and not the total GDP of the country should be used. However, if the total GDP is used, then the total population of the country should be one criterion to be included in the calculation.

85. The Council Director for Vietnam suggested that since in the proposed adjustment the use of GDP was one of the criteria, other criterion could however be explored and considered for the calculation, such as the number of fishers in the coastal areas. She informed the Council that although Vietnam supports the proposal in principle, she reiterated the complex process that would be involved in seeking the internal approval of the authorities concerned with financial matters in the country and thus, Vietnam could not directly commit its concurrence to the proposed adjustment of the MRC at this Meeting.

86. While supporting the proposal on the adjustment of the MRC, the Council Directors for Indonesia and Myanmar however expressed the view that it would be possible to increase the amount of their respective MRCs by only 25% of the existing MRC.

87. The Council Director for Cambodia informed the Meeting that the proposal will be brought to the attention of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Cambodia, and thus he cannot commit his country's position on the proposal at this Meeting. He requested that other criteria should also be considered in the calculation of the MRC.

88. The Council Director for the Philippines supported the existing MRC, while considering the proposal for future increase of the MRC. In the meantime, BFAR will work with AQD for funding arrangements on projects that are aligned with priorities of BFAR.

89. The Council Director from Japan expressed his understanding that the proposed adjustment including the rationalization of the Secretariat which was discussed at the Special Meeting of the National Coordinators in December 2010 had been made clear. While expressing his support to the proposed adjustment of the MRC, he reiterated that the contribution of the Government of Japan to SEAFDEC comes in the form of Trust Fund.

90. The Council Director for Malaysia expressed no objection to the proposal to increase the MRC based on the formula proposed by SEAFDEC. However, since Malaysia deemed it high to increase its current MRC by 100%, he therefore suggested that SEAFDEC should reconsider the proposal by minimizing certain budgetary items including the possibility of abolishing the Regional Fisheries Policy Network (RFPN) stationed at the SEAFDEC Secretariat.

91. After the deliberation, the Council Directors for Brunei Darussalam, Japan, Lao PDR, and Thailand reiterated their support to the proposal. In addition, the Council suggested that the Secretary-General should visit the Member Countries that had difficulty in proceeding with their respective MRC adjustments as proposed, to provide clarification and rationale of the proposal to the concerned authorities of five countries, such as Indonesia, Cambodia, Myanmar, Philippines and Vietnam. Moreover, the Council also suggested that the SEAFDEC Secretary-General should take the opportunity to discuss the issues related to MRC with the Ministers of the Member Countries during the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference in June 2011.

## **10.2 Improvement of SEAFDEC Information Tools and Activities for Enhancing Visibility and Communication**

92. The Council took note of the progress of implementation of the information activities aimed at enhancing the visibility of SEAFDEC that were conducted by the Secretariat and Departments in 2010 (**Annex 26**).

## **10.3 Operation of the Training and Research Vessels**

93. After noting the information provided by SEAFDEC regarding the conduct of cruise surveys to be carried out by the M.V. SEAFDEC and the M.V SEAFDEC 2, the Council endorsed the plan of activities for the use of the vessels in 2011 (**Annex 27**).

94. The Council Director for Vietnam informed the Council that Vietnam proposed to use the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 for the conduct of a five-year research survey on small pelagic stock assessment in Vietnam waters starting in 2012 under the cost-sharing basis. The proposed schedule of the cruise is preferably from April to May and also from October to November. In this regard, the Council endorsed the request made by Vietnam and asked SEAFDEC to include the request of Vietnam in the plan of operations of the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 in 2012.

95. The Council was informed by the Secretary-General of SEAFDEC on the collaboration between SEAFDEC and the BOBLME Project, which focuses in the Andaman Sea area. He added that the BOBLME Project planned to request for the utilization of the SEAFDEC vessels to conduct collaborative fisheries resources surveys with financial support from the BOBLME Project and the information that could be derived from the surveys would be shared with the SEAFDEC Member Countries. The Council Director for Myanmar suggested that since four Member Countries of SEAFDEC are involved in the

BOBLME Project, he requested SEAFDEC to coordinate with the BOBLME Project for the utilization of the SEAFDEC vessels. In this regard, the Council approved the plan for utilization of the vessels for such collaborative fisheries resources surveys.

96. With the view of the need to maximize the utilization of the M.V. SEAFDEC 2, the Council Director for Japan requested the Member Countries to fully utilize the vessel based on the agreed guidelines when the vessel was granted to TD in 2003. In this regard, the Council Director for Japan supported the request on the use of the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 by other organizations under the SEAFDEC collaborative arrangements.

97. Referring to the proposal of Bangladesh Fishery Research Institute (BFRI) on the utilization of the M.V. SEAFDEC 2 in 2010 funded by the Islamic Development Fund, the Council was informed that the Member Countries had already endorsed through referendum the request made by BFRI. However, due to late availability of the budget they were not able to conduct the survey as scheduled. In response, the Council agreed in principle the request of BFRI to utilize the vessel when their budget is available.

#### **10.4 Strengthening the Roles and Functions of RAC and Proposed Adjustment on Streamlining the Working Mechanism of RAC**

98. The Council was informed on the proposed strengthening of the roles and functions of Regional Advisory Committee on Fisheries Management in Southeast Asia (RAC) and the proposed adjustment on streamlining the working mechanism of RAC (**Annex 28**), and also noted the recommendations from the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting and 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of RAC in 2008 and 2009, respectively as well as the Special Meeting of the SEAFDEC National Coordinators in December 2010.

99. The Council Director for Vietnam recommended that RAC operations should focus on scientific and technical issues as outlined in the Terms of Reference (TOR) to support the Member Countries in sustainable fisheries management.

100. While considering the revised TOR of RAC as attached to **Annex 28** the Council Director for Singapore requested SEAFDEC to also circulate the original TOR for information of the Council and suggested that other activities such as combating IUU fishing could be included in the scope of RAC activities. She also suggested that the TOR of RAC should not be revised but the proposed changes should only be on the working mechanism of RAC.

101. With regards to the RAC meetings to be conducted within the prescribed period, the Council Director for Thailand suggested that SEAFDEC could also avail of the teleconferencing facilities to communicate among Member Countries and facilitate the discussion and dialogue between the standing members of RAC as well as the other members who have expertise in some specific fields. She also informed the Council that the use of the teleconferencing facilities could be extended to the other activities of SEAFDEC.

102. Since the issues to be discussed by RAC are quite broad, the Council recommended that RAC should focus its discussion on specific fisheries management issues. The Council Director for Malaysia then expressed the view that the working mechanism of RAC should not duplicate with the functions of the SEAFDEC Program Committee.

103. After discussion, the Council endorsed the proposed adjustments of the TOR and the working mechanism of RAC as proposed by SEAFDEC.

## **XI. MANAGEMENT OF THE CENTER**

### **11.1 Collaborative Arrangement between SEAFDEC and Other Organizations**

104. The Council noted the establishment of collaborative arrangements between SEAFDEC and other organizations in 2010 (**Annex 29**) such as those with Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (TUMSAT); Graduate School of Agricultural and Life Sciences, and Faculty of Agriculture, University of Tokyo (GSALS-UT); Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN); Colombo Plan Secretariat (CPS); WorldFish Center; University of Tehran, Iran; GAIA Mariculture Pte, Ltd. (Singapore). The collaborative arrangements were aimed at facilitating the exchange of information among researchers, participation in training programs, and promotion of academic exchanges in information of mutual interest for the sustainable development of fisheries in the region.

105. The Council Director for Malaysia suggested that SEAFDEC's future collaboration should ensure widespread benefits to the Member Countries at large. In response, it was clarified that the collaborative activities are envisaged to build the capacity of SEAFDEC staff which through multiplier effect would eventually benefit the Member Countries considering that the progress and development of relevant activities are included in the SEAFDEC programs on capacity building and human resource development. In addition, it was also reiterated that the collaborative activities are formulated in line with the programs and activities approved by the Council as endorsed by the SEAFDEC Program Committee.

## **XII. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **12.1 Adoption of Auditor's Financial Report for the Year 2009**

106. The Council was informed that the official auditors of SEAFDEC, Fuangthong Accounting and Lawyer Office was unable to send a representative to the Meeting due to unforeseen circumstances beyond their control. In this regard, the Council agreed that the Finance Officer of SEAFDEC would present the Auditor's Financial Report for the Year 2009 on behalf of the auditors.

107. In accordance with Article 6, paragraph 2 (ii) of the Agreement Establishing the Center, the Council endorsed the audited consolidated financial statement of the Center for the year ended 31 December 2009 including that of the Secretariat and the three Departments for the Year 2009 (**Annex 30**) as audited by the Center's official auditors.

108. As regards the financial statement of MFRD, the Council Director for Singapore requested to replace "none" by "not applicable (n/a)".

### **12.2 Un-audited Financial Report for the Year 2010, and Status of the Financial Situation for the Year 2011**

109. The Council took note of the Un-audited Consolidated Financial Report for the Year 2010 (**Annex 31**), which comprised the Un-audited Balance Sheet as of 31 December 2010, the Un-audited Statement of Income and Expenditures for the Year 2010, and the Un-audited Fund Balance as of 31 December 2010.

110. The Council was informed by the Council Director for Singapore that in the case of MFRD, its funds in 2010 are under the management of the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) and are already audited by the Auditors of AVA.

111. The Council also noted the Status of the Financial Situation for the Year 2011 (**Annex 32**), which includes the MRC in 2011 from the Member Countries and contributions from the Fisheries Agency of Japan for the Japanese Trust Fund program as well as other international organizations.

### **12.3 Proposed Budgetary Requirements of the Center for the Year 2012**

112. The Council approved the proposed budgetary requirements of the Center for the Year 2012 (**Annex 33**) and requested the Secretariat and the Departments to finalize the actual budget for submission to and consideration of the Member Countries for funding support.

#### **12.4 Other Financial Matters**

113. The Council approved the change in 2010 of the auditing firms for AQD from “KPMG Manabat Sanagustin” & Co to “SGV and Company”, and for MFRDMD from “MNZWAJ Associates (AF 1959)” to “Adib Azhar & Co. (AF 1446)”.

### **XIII. CONCLUDING MATTERS**

#### **13.1 Adoption of the Meeting Report and Press Statement**

114. The Council adopted the Report of the Forty-third Meeting of the Council and the Press Statement on the results of the Meeting (**Annex 34**) on 8 April 2011.

#### **13.2 Date and Venue of the Forty-fourth Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council**

115. In considering the date and venue of the Forty-fourth Meeting of the Council, the Council Director for Myanmar informed the Council that the Government of Myanmar would accept the responsibility of hosting the next Council Meeting in Myanmar in 2012.

116. The Council expressed its appreciation to the offer made by the Council Director for Myanmar to host the next Council Meeting in Myanmar, and requested the SEAFDEC Secretariat to discuss this further with the Council Director for Myanmar for the finalization of the exact date and venue of the next Meeting.

#### **13.3 Vote of Thanks to the Host Government**

117. On behalf of the SEAFDEC Council, the Council Director for Lao PDR *Dr. Bounkhouang Khambounheuang* expressed the Council’s appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Malaysia, for their warm hospitality and arrangements for the 43<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council. He also congratulated the Chairperson of the Meeting for his excellent chairpersonship which enabled the Meeting to accomplish its objectives in a very efficient manner. He also expressed appreciation to all Council Directors for their valuable contribution to the Meeting as well as for the policy guidance given to SEAFDEC towards its future operation and in maximizing the benefits to all the Member Countries. Lastly, he expressed his appreciation to the Secretariat of the Meeting, particularly to the staff of the Department of Fisheries Malaysia, for their preparatory works and arrangements which ensured the smooth and successful conduct of the Meeting. His statement appears in **Annex 35**.

### **XIII. CLOSING OF THE MEETING**

118. On behalf of the Council Director for Malaysia *Dató Ahamad Sabki bin Mahmood*, the Alternate Council Director for Malaysia *Mr. Ismail bin Abu Hassan*, expressed the appreciation to all Council Directors for their active participation and contribution to the Meeting. In expressing the gratitude of the Council to the Secretariat of the Meeting for their support and hard work, he also offered the apologies for whatever shortcomings and inconvenience that the participants may have been experienced during the Meeting. He added that since the task ahead is very challenging especially with the coming ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference in June 2011, he encouraged the Council Directors to extend their utmost assistance during the Conference. On the part of SEAFDEC, he exhorted that more efforts will have to be done not only for the forthcoming Conference but also in addressing the several issues raised by the Council at this Meeting especially the upcoming review of the roles and functions of SEAFDEC and the proposed adjustment of the MRC. He also encouraged SEAFDEC to collaborate with the Council Directors for the effective and efficient implementation of the instructions and directives of the Council.

After expressing his wish for the participants to have safe journey back to their countries and homes, he declared the 43<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council closed. His Closing Remarks appears as **Annex 36**.