



<b>ASIA-PACIFIC FISHERY COMMISSION</b>
<b>Thirty-fifth Session</b>
<b>Cebu, Philippines, 11-13 May 2018</b>
<b>Key conclusions and recommendations from the Seventh APFIC Regional Consultative Forum Meeting, Cebu, Philippines, 07-09 May 2018</b>

The Seventh APFIC Regional Consultative Forum Meeting (7<sup>th</sup> RCFM), from 7-9 May 2018, was convened in Cebu, Philippines to provide a platform for member countries and APFIC regional partners to share knowledge on the theme “*Sustainable Development for Resilient Blue Growth of Fisheries and Aquaculture*” and discuss major issues and required strategy and actions at country and regional levels.

The Forum was attended by 80 participants from 16 countries, together with representatives from ten regional and international partner organizations and projects. The Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), the Government of the Philippines, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the APFIC hosted the meeting.

### **Progress toward resilient blue growth in the region**

The RCFM participants recognized the great advances in the four thematic areas pertaining to sustainable and resilient fisheries and aquaculture for blue growth in the region, through national and regional efforts in addressing priority issues, such as combatting IUU fishing, strengthening regulation on aquaculture, implementing good fisheries and aquaculture development approaches and practices such as EAF/ EAA, aquaculture zonal development, innovative aquaculture systems and practices and developing inclusive, human rights-based and gender sensitive fisheries and aquaculture value chains.

There are a number of remaining and emerging challenges to the sustainability and resilience of fisheries and aquaculture sector. To effectively address these challenges requires concerted efforts within and across governments, NGO, CSO and development and research partners. These include: i) improved knowledge on the contributions of the sector to food and nutrition security, livelihoods and economic growth, the impacts of changes in the environment on the sector and dependent communities, the environmental footprints of the sector; ii) strengthened enabling environments, knowledge bases and human capacity for adopting appropriate planning and management tools, including ICTs; iii) increased awareness and collaborative efforts to address issues relating to aquaculture feed, risk of AMR associated

with aquaculture and reduced fish loss in post-harvesting; and iv) clearer understanding of the gender-differentiate roles of women and men along the value chains.

In addition, there remains a great need in many countries for reinforced legal frameworks and guiding policies to ensure a human rights-based and environmentally friendly development of the region's fisheries and aquaculture sectors in line with the Small-scale Fisheries Voluntary Guidelines and the CCRF.

More targeted DRM and climate change strategies and technologies for the sector are needed in several countries. There is also a need for increased efforts to combat IUU fishing in the region. Continued and strengthened sharing of experiences and knowledge and collaborative efforts across the countries in the region are required to attain the full potential of blue growth in the Asia-Pacific.

Specific summaries and recommendations for each thematic area are:

## **Theme 1. Improvements in fisheries and aquaculture governance**

### ***Strengthen aquaculture planning and Management through adoption of relevant tools***

The regional consultation recognized the great importance to strengthen the planning and management of aquaculture industry in order to mitigate the adverse impacts on the natural environments and other stakeholders and reduce the risk of the sector itself. The participants generally considered the application of appropriate planning and management tools as highly relevant and pressing action for informed planning and management. Based on the sharing of experiences and lessons of a number of countries in piloting selected aquaculture planning and management tools with FAO support and working group discussion, the participants identified the major challenges and recommended strategy and actions for promoting adoption of aquaculture planning and management tools.

#### ***Major challenges:***

- Lack of established laws and regulations or weak implementation of existing regulation in supporting the adoption of the tools;
- Lack of common recognition to need for adopting the tools at different levels of government authorities
- Lack of financial support and human capacity
- Difficulty in adopting the tools for different culture systems (environments) and multi-species culture.

#### ***Recommended regional strategy/actions:***

- Regional awareness raising and sensitization to encourage member countries to adopt/implement planning and management tools.
- Regional sharing of knowledge and experiences on aquaculture planning and management tools
- Support Piloting projects on aquaculture planning and management tools in member countries
- Develop and disseminate more priority tools (impact evaluation and monitoring etc.) from the 16 draft tools for piloting
- Regional capacity building activity for government officers and professional

***Recommended country strategy/actions:***

- Strengthen national regulation and institution support to adoption of relevant tools
- Conduct country assessment on status of adoption of different planning and management tools and potential for increased adoption
- Support pilot testing of relevant tools at national level
- Technical capacity building through training for government officer, extensions, fish farmers, key stakeholders and NGOs

***Strengthen aquaculture governance through regulation and appropriate management approaches such as EAA and Zonal development***

The regional consultation reviewed the progress and success experiences of some countries in strengthening aquaculture regulations and ecosystem approach to aquaculture (EAA), zonal development and other management approaches for improved governance of aquaculture. The participants generally agreed improvement of aquaculture governance through strengthened regulatory framework and enforcement and implementation of new management approach is highly relevant to all the countries in the region and require pressing actions by the different players in the region. The participants identified the major challenges and recommended strategy and actions for strengthening aquaculture regulation and implementing new management approaches, such as EAA and zonal development.

***Major challenges:***

- Lack of strong political will and institutional support to enforcement of established laws and regulation.
- Lack of concerted efforts at regional, national and local levels to strengthen aquaculture regulation and governance.
- Lack institutional support, financial support and human capabilities at national and regional level
- Lack of good understanding to importance aquaculture regulation, EAA, and zonal development among the policy makers and stakeholders
- Lack of inter-sectoral collaboration in regulate and plan aquaculture industry

***Recommended regional strategy/actions:***

- Regional documentation and sharing of successful cases of good aquaculture governance and implementation of EAA and zonal development
- Review and sharing existing laws and regulations governing aquaculture in different countries.
- Support members countries in implementation or piloting of EAA and zonal development
- Regional workshop on capacity building (government officer, extension officer) on aquaculture regulation, EAA and zonal development

***Recommended country strategy/actions:***

- Develop and implement program to strengthen aquaculture regulation and promote EAA and zonal development

- Strengthen the inter-sectoral coordination and engagement of different stakeholders including CSOs;
- Establish appropriate administrative measures including budget for effectively implementation of EAA and zonal development plans
- Develop human resource capabilities through training for government and extension officer
- Strengthen institutional support for implementation of EAA and zonal development.

### ***Experiences and lessons on combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing***

IUU remains an issue of high relevance and priority to the region and requirements to combat IUU from market states, port states, flag states and coastal states as well as from consumers are increasing as awareness grows about the prevalence and negative impacts to the aquatic ecosystems and society of IUU fishing. Many countries in the region have progressed significantly in their efforts to combat IUU fishing, including the development of NPOA-IUU, NPOA-Capacity, accession to the PSMA, and efforts to strengthen MCS within and across the countries. Lessons learned from recent advances in countries will provide useful examples for other countries in the region. However, political will, technical capacity and funding to implement plans remain key challenges in many countries. The participants underlined that, although the costs of combating IUU may be high in the short-term, the benefits to doing so will outweigh the costs. Increased knowledge on the biological, economic and social impacts of IUU fishing assist in garnering support to combat IUU and to monitor the benefits derived from management actions.

#### ***Recommended strategy/actions:***

- APFIC to revisit the APFIC IUU report and disseminate the BOBP-IGO IUU report to raise awareness of the impacts of IUU fishing and opportunities to combat IUU.
- Increased sharing of tools, knowledge, experiences and examples from the region on combatting IUU (e.g. NPOAs) through reports and regional workshops
- Increase learning opportunities, such as through best practice platforms and working groups
- Encourage collaboration and coordinated efforts across agencies and partners within countries and among neighbouring countries
- Encourage political commitment and coordination from governments
- Implement Catch Documentation and Traceability Systems that are nationally relevant
- Prioritise awareness raising and capacity development at the national and sub-national levels, within governments and across the value chains and communities.

### ***Promoting and implementing ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF), co-management approaches***

The RCFM embraced the EAF as a holistic approach to supporting social, economic and environmental well-being within the sector. Thanks to efforts across the region, there is broad understanding of the EAF concepts and approaches in the countries but implementation of the EAF principles and approaches are still facing challenges including lack of political will, often lacking policy guidance and legal backing to support efforts toward EAF, improving but still insufficient supporting data/information on the three EAF pillars, and insufficient monitoring systems to evaluate EAF implementation. Countries are gaining experience in developing EAF and co-management plans and underline the importance of effective participation of stakeholders and local leaders as key to the development and implementation. Experience in the region has also shown that

EAF is rarely undertaken in one single, all encompassing effort but is generally an incremental, step-by-step process, with the building blocks of technical and facilitation skills being built along the way to support these efforts.

***Recommended strategy/actions:***

- Countries need to integrate more thoroughly EAF principles into their fisheries policies and legal frameworks
- Establish EAFM partnerships across the fisheries stakeholders and development partners within countries and in the region
- EAFM efforts at all levels should ensure strong champions to facilitate successful implementation
- Regional organizations should continue their support countries and provide coordination of EAFM efforts in the region
- APFIC and other partners should organize an EAFM lessons sharing workshop for practitioners
- Countries and partners should aim to improve translation and communication of EAFM documentation for increased uptake within the countries
- Gender-specific EAFM training and capacity building is needed
- Partners are requested to establish EAFM rating/scoring system to support monitoring of EAFM implementation across the region

**Theme 2. Innovative fisheries and aquaculture production and management systems and practices for more efficient and sustainable production**

***Promote climate resilient/smart aquaculture***

The regional forum recognized climate change and climate variability impose great threats to the performance and sustainability of aquaculture industry in the region. At the same time, some farming systems and practices also contribute significantly to GHG emission. The regional forum participants consider promoting climate resilient and smart aquaculture farming systems and practices is a pressing agenda of high relevance to most countries in the region. Based on the experiences and lessons shared by a number of countries in piloting some climate resilient and smart aquaculture systems and practices through country initiative with or without FAO support and working group discussion, the participants identified the major challenges and recommended strategy and actions for promoting scaling up of climate resilient and climate smart aquaculture systems and practices in the region.

***Major challenges:***

- Lack of available scientific knowledge and concrete data on specific impact of climate change to aquaculture for decision making
- Lack of national action plan on climate change adaptation and mitigation for aquaculture sub-sector
- Lack of investment to adopt climate resilient and climate smart aquaculture technologies including energy saving technologies and improvement of aquaculture facility
- Lack of awareness and acceptability fish farmers to farming of species and systems that well adapt to climate change impacts or contribute to mitigation;

***Recommended Regional strategy/actions:***

- ▶ Document and disseminate successful examples of climate resilient and climate smart aquaculture systems, technologies and management practices across the countries;
- ▶ Support the member countries in developing and implementing strategy and project promoting resilient/smart aquaculture

***Recommended country strategy/actions:***

- ▶ Develop and implement major program for climate resilient/smart aquaculture in vulnerable zone to climate change impacts
- ▶ Develop and Implement conducive policy and incentive measures, e.g. tax exemption for adopting climate smart technologies in aquaculture, e.g. solar energy.
- ▶ Strengthen the public support/services to small farm holders in adopting climate resilient and climate smart aquaculture systems, technologies and farming practices.

***Promote scaling up of innovative aquaculture systems/practices for more sustainable and efficient production***

Aquaculture in Asia-Pacific is facing various challenges. To effectively tackle the challenges requires innovation on farming technology, farming systems and farming practices. A number of countries introduced their initiatives and progress in adopting different innovative technologies, farming systems and farm management practices. While sharing the success and experiences, the forum participants also recognized some major constraints and challenges in scaling up the innovative aquaculture technology, farming systems and practices and recommended strategy and actions needed.

***Major challenges:***

- Lack of financial support to research and development for innovative aquaculture technology
- High investment for adoption of innovative systems and technology

***Recommended regional strategy/actions:***

- ▶ Promote sharing of innovative culture systems, technology and farming practices and economic cooperation across the countries
- ▶ Provide some technical assistant to the members that want to develop innovative aquaculture system/ practices
- ▶ Support regional/country project to disseminate innovative systems, technology farming practices, such as energy saving/new energy, pond-based re-circulatory system (RAS), innovative agro-aquaculture and multi-trophic culture system etc, mechanization and automation

***Recommended country strategy/actions:***

- ▶ Promote PPP in adopting innovative systems, technology farming practices
- ▶ Increase support to R&D and dissemination of innovative systems, technology farming practices
- ▶ Develop and implement appropriate conducive policy and incentive measures to support adoption of innovative systems, technology farming practices

## ***Implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines)***

The RCFM reiterated the importance and contributions of small-scale fisheries (SSF) to production, livelihoods and food security, and economic growth in the region. The participants agreed on the need to recognize the human/social dimensions in fisheries management and along the value chains. The RCFM also acknowledged the need to approach SSF management through holistic social development, human rights and gender lenses as means to improving the SSF capacity to responsibly use, manage and benefit from fisheries resources and building their resilience to extreme events, crises and climate change. The SSF Voluntary Guidelines were deemed highly relevant to the region and able to provide excellent guidance to countries and other fisheries stakeholders.

### ***Recommended strategy/actions:***

- SSF voluntary guidelines should be effectively applied across the region
- Countries should investigate/implement enabling conditions that would support diversified and risk minimizing livelihoods within SSF, including the provision of technical and soft skills trainings to support these.
- Countries and partners should promote capability building to support SSF in their moves toward more sustainable fisheries and livelihoods
- Fisheries institutions should engage national human rights institutions and other development institutions to support the holistic implementation of the SSF guidelines
- Fisheries institutions and regional bodies should increase collaboration with CSO and NGO in the promotion of SSF
- Countries are encouraged to create working groups/task forces to support the implementation of SSF guidelines into national fisheries policies and management plans
- Countries are encouraged to develop and implement National Plans of Action for the application of the SSF voluntary guidelines
- Awareness campaigns about the SSF guidelines at the national and local levels complemented by adaptations of the SSF guidelines that are more easily absorbed by communities and others supporting the SSF communities
- Conduct Information, Education and Communication activities about the SSF guidelines as one of the priorities under EAFM in managing municipal/coastal waters
- There should be a strong engagement of all stakeholders, including the national government, in promoting and implementing SSF
- Participatory approaches should be encouraged by the countries and capacity built to support effective participation of SSF stakeholders in fisheries management

### ***Innovations in technologies and practices for sustainable fisheries/Use of information and communication technology (ICT)***

ICT have existed for a long-time but the fast rate of development and wide spread accessibility to ICT were recognized as providing opportunities and imperatives to support sustainable fisheries, enhancing safety at sea and early warning systems, fisheries governance, market access, social networking, etc. Experiences in the region and elsewhere have shown that stakeholder engagement in the design and development of ICT systems is a key element to their success, along-side enabling environments through appropriate policies and information management systems. Government

participation in local efforts to introduce ICTs is also key to enabling the long-term sustainability of ICT and ICT-based information systems.

The participants were also updated on efforts to use artificial reefs and fish enhancement devices (FED) to help create habitats for fish and increase livelihoods for coastal fishing communities. The monitoring and documentation of long-term effects on the environment and the fisheries was also discussed by the participants.

***Recommended strategy/actions:***

- Regional bodies, such as FAO/APFIC, should support knowledge sharing on ICT tools and experiences on their use in support of fisheries management and development
- Cost effective ICT should be implemented to support improved catch documentation and knowledge building for SSF
- Assessments of the usefulness and economics of ICT as well as their effectiveness as a tool for fisheries management should be undertaken
- Guidance should be provided to fisheries stakeholders on the extent and scope of ICT uses
- Consideration about data sovereignty, privacy, and key data elements for sharing of data need to be addressed when developing ICT
- Installation of AR/FAD/FED require supporting management systems
- Consider the installation of artificial reefs where deemed required to support sustainable fisheries in coastal provinces
- Local community consultation/participation is necessary before the installation of AR/FAD/FED
- Conduct more research to understand effectiveness of FAD/FED/AR in securing food security within ecological limits
- Provide clearer definitions of FAD and FED
- Capacity building for stakeholders about FAD/FED design, use and maintenance
- Develop technical report on the use and efficacy on artisanal FAD/FED in the region

**Theme 3. Building resilience of fisheries and aquaculture systems in the Asia-Pacific region**

***Aquaculture insurance for resilience of small farm holders***

Small aquaculture farmers in the region are now facing different risks. The increasing climate variability, culture animal diseases and other environmental hazards have causing increasing economic loss to the aquaculture operations in the region. Some countries have made attempt to strengthen the resilience of small farm holders through piloting aquaculture insurance program often with government support. Based on the experiences and lessons shared by some countries, the progress has been limited in most countries. While recognizing the great challenges in promoting aquaculture insurance, the forum participants believe it is a pressing issue of high relevance to many countries in the region. Some important strategy and actions were put forward by through working group discussion.

***Major challenges:***

- Very few economically viable insurance schemes have developed and run successful for aquaculture sector in the region;
- Few commercial Insurance Companies have ventured into the aquaculture insurance due to high business risk and technical complexity;
- Lack of strong interest for aqua-farmers to buy insurance policy for their crop and facility due lack of awareness on the need to manage the increasing risks to their stock and facility through insurance and unwillingness to pay the apparently high premium;
- Government lack of financial resource to support the initial on development of aquaculture insurance;

***Recommended regional strategy/actions:***

- Promote regional exchange and cooperation in promoting aquaculture insurance to build resilience for small aquaculture farm holders;
- Develop financially viable and affordable aquaculture insurance for major and high risk aquaculture commodities

***Recommended country strategy/actions:***

- Develop implement government programs supporting climate resilient/smart aquaculture to reduce the business risks of commercial insurance companies engaged in aquaculture insurance
- Develop and implement appropriate strategy in promoting aquaculture insurance such group insurance based on the implementation of GAQPs and establishing cooperative insurance funds;
- Increase awareness and knowledge of aquaculture farmers on the importance of insurance;
- Develop and implement appropriate government policy measures to support commercial aquaculture schemes, which cover fully the crops/products in addition to life and fixed assets

***Risk of Antimicrobial resistance in aquaculture and required coping strategy and actions***

Risk of Antimicrobial resistance has become a hot issue attracting increasing attention globally. Due to feature of Asian aquaculture, increasing disease problem while the farming moving towards more intensive with increasing transboundary movement of live cultured animals, AMR risk associated with aquaculture is an emerging issue of great significance to many countries. Some initiative addressing the AMR associated with aquaculture in Asia have been started by some countries and organizations in the region. Knowledge and progress were shared in the forum. There was general concern over the challenge to the region in effective addressing the issue. The forum also put forward a number of strategy and actions required for effectively tackling the issue.

***Major challenges:***

- Lack of general awareness and understanding to the risk of AMR associated with aquaculture;
- Lack of information, data on use of antimicrobial in aquaculture and profound information and knowledge on risk of AMR associated and its risk to human health and aquaculture itself;
- Lack of technical capability to effectively monitor AMR associated with aquaculture;
- Lack of adequate regulations on AMU in aquaculture and effective enforcement of existing regulations;

***Recommended regional strategy/actions:***

- Raise the awareness of different stakeholder on the risk of AMR to human health and aquaculture;
- Promote regional sharing of knowledge and good practices and collaboration through technical networking on AMR and AMU;
- Develop regional guidelines to support the country's effort to managing AMR and AMU in aquaculture
- Support member countries in developing required human and lab capacity

***Recommended regional strategy/actions:***

- Increase the awareness of stakeholders on AMR and AMU;
- Develop implement AMR and AMU monitoring and surveillance system and mechanism;
- Strengthen the control over the production, labelling, sale and use of antibiotics in aquaculture;
- Strengthening the implementation of aquatic animal health program/national strategies on aquatic animal health; and,
- Promote good aquaculture practices to include biosecurity measure in all the production chain

***Lessons and experiences on risk management, disaster risk management (DRM), and climate change adaptation (CCA) for resilient fisheries***

Although extreme events and climate variability and climate change are environmental phenomenon that are often difficult to control or predict, countries in the region are increasingly developing or improving their DRM and CC adaptation strategies for fisheries. There is, however, much room for learning and potential for further development. The sharing of information, in particular innovative adaptations and lessons learnt, is key to moving forward in this regard. The current DRR and CC focus not only on the resilience of the aquatic systems but also on the coastal/riparian/fisheries human communities who may be directly or indirectly impacted by extreme events and changes in the aquatic systems.

As experience in DRM and CCA in fisheries grows, the participants noted that improved planning, with clear priorities and standard operating procedures, to ensure risk management and vulnerability reduction of fishing communities sustainably and in line with build-back-better approaches in line with the Paris Accord and Sendai Framework. These factors should also be accounted for when updating existing risk management regulations. Human driven (protracted) crises should also be accounted for in risk management plans within the sector.

The participants recognized the importance of prioritizing those measures that are readily achievable and with high impact due to the urgent need to improve the sector's resilience to extreme events and climate change. Given that extreme events and climate change often arise in situations that are already under stress or in vulnerable contexts due to poverty, overfishing, etc, building the general resilience of ecosystems and dependent communities will often be a no regrets option for the fisheries.

The participants discussed how internet-based information and ICT technologies are improving countries' abilities to disseminate weather and environmental early warnings although challenges remain in providing this information to fishers at sea or in isolated areas.

Although awareness about climate change and extreme events impacts and options for fisheries has increased, there still exists a need to increase awareness through knowledge and support capacity building activities within artisanal fisheries and vulnerable groups, including special programmes (youth and gender-sensitive) and to develop more fisheries-specific strategies to support national CCA and DRM efforts.

***Recommended strategy/actions:***

- Knowledge of CC and extreme events impacts to the aquatic systems, the fisheries sectors and dependent communities in the regions must be increased and disseminated in appropriate ways for use by fisheries stakeholders, including fisheries agencies
- Strategic action plans must involve all relevant stakeholders to improve cooperation and create co-adapted DRM and CCA plans
- CCA and DRM in fisheries require increased political will and financial and human resources
- Cross-sectoral CCA strategies and plans should incorporate food security and fisheries risks and adaptation opportunities
- Where lacking, insurance and social protection schemes for artisanal fisheries should be supported by the countries
- Countries and partners should increase awareness regarding safety at sea in fishing communities and implement programs to increase safety at sea.
- Countries and partners should strengthen regional initiatives to monitor weather and environmental change and to improve coordinated responses. A platform or working group focussing on fisheries could be developed for the region, in collaboration with relevant IGO (such as IMO and WMO) and other national/regional agencies with an emphasis on partnership on DRR and CCA. Sharing of information could include: Access to best practices in cyclone preparedness initiatives in fisheries; Sharing experiences via regional workshops; enabling access of countries to continuous, real-time data; and sharing access to early warning systems that are applicable to other countries in the region
- Blue growth policies should integrate the impact of long-term CC
- Collation of FAO publications and other publications on the matter should be made more readily available to countries and other partners

#### **Theme 4. Gender-sensitive and inclusive fisheries and aquaculture value chains**

***Promote responsible production and use of feed and ingredients for sustainable aquaculture growth***

Along with general trend of aquaculture intensification and commercialization in the region, there has been increasing use of compound feed in culturing of most commodities. Due to the rapid increase in demand and limited production capacity, some important feed ingredients such as fishmeal, fish oil and soybean are largely outsourced from other regions. This imposes great uncertainty to the sustainability of aquaculture industry in the region. Meanwhile, increasing demand for low valued fish as direct food for fish or for process fishmeal has led to increasing fish pressure on natural population. In order to reduce the dependence on fishmeal for aquaculture, many countries and regional organizations have been making efforts to develop sustainable alternative feed ingredients for aquaculture. While significant progress has been achieved, the translation of research outputs to commercial production has been slow. The forum identified the major challenges and recommended strategy and actions for promoting responsible production and use of feed and feed ingredients in the region.

***Major challenges:***

- Available information and knowledge on sustainable alternative aquaculture feed ingredients not effectively shared;
- Existing technological breakthrough and research results are not effectively translated into commercial production;
- Limited investment to RnD on thorough breakthrough in the development of sustainable alternative feeds ingredients, such as optimum combination of alternative feed ingredients for different species/life stages and related manufacturing technology
- Lack of technical support to small farmers on how to best manage feeding for efficiency;

***Recommended regional strategy/actions:***

- Increase the awareness of government and other stakeholders on responsible production and use of feed and ingredients;
- Establish A regional standard and database on cost-effective feed ingredients available in the region
- Promote knowledge sharing between different players, such as R&D agency, private feed companies and government on alternate feed ingredients and related feed technology

***Recommended country strategy/actions:***

- Continued support to R&D on new sustainable alternative of key feed ingredients and their effective use in feed formulation and related feed technology
- Strengthen partnership between public research institutes and private feed companies for effective translation of research outbreaks in use of alternative feed ingredients into commercialized feed production
- Strengthen the technical support to farmers on good practices for best efficiency of feed use;
- Develop appropriate policy and strategy to support scaled production of alternative feed ingredients
- Support local small feed mills in remote areas to produce quality and cost-effective feed following established feed standard and SOPs

***Enhance woman's role and benefit sharing along the aquaculture value chain***

With the rapid development of aquaculture and expansion of the value chain, women are playing increasing important role in aquaculture production in the region. While women are contributing to the sectoral development, their engagement, status and share of benefit in the industry has not been adequately investigated and documented. Some countries and organizations in the region have lauched some initiatives to enhance the role and benefit sharing in aquaculture sector. In general, efforts made in this dimension is still limited. Basded on the idenfication of some major constraints, the forum recommended required strategy and actions for effectively addressing the gender issue in aquaculture industry for strengthened gender-sensitive and inclusive aquaculture value chain.

***Major challenges:***

- Limited initiatives to address gender issues in aquaculture in the region;

- Limited or no gender disaggregation data on women's role and benefit sharing in aquaculture value chain in the region;

***Recommended regional strategy/actions:***

- Conduct comprehensive baseline study on women's engagement, role and benefit sharing in entire value chain of different aquaculture commodities;
- Establish a regional platform for the governments and civil society to promote gender integration in aquaculture value chain and to share their experiences and lessons;
- Develop regional technical guideline for enhancing the role and benefit sharing in aquaculture in the region;

***Recommended country strategy/actions:***

- Improve the collection of gender disaggregation data on women's role and benefit sharing in aquaculture sector;
- Government support to women-initiated programme at the local level
- Develop appropriate aquaculture policy and strategy, which can enhance the role and benefit sharing of women along the aquaculture value chain;
- Implement trainings on aquaculture entrepreneurship and farm management skill for women;

***Actions, experiences, and lessons on value addition, reducing food loss, improving access to markets and trade, and promoting gender equality in capture fisheries value chains***

The RCFM acknowledged that, with the general declining catch in captured fisheries, there is an increasing need to manage post harvest losses, improve value addition and ensure better access to markets. Member countries are increasing their knowledge and experiences in the use of improved technologies and processes in the post-harvest sectors from which other countries can adopt and learn.

The participants supported greater attention to issues of gender equity and integration in support of sustainable fisheries development and in line with the SSF voluntary guidelines. In particular, the participants recognized the important role women play across the fisheries value chains and the need for increased recognition of these roles and support for their engagement in decision-making processes in fisheries management. The participants were shown examples in which gender disaggregated data and empirical studies in value chains have proven useful in improving fisheries management and value chains and how existing gender value chain analysis frameworks and tools can be used to complement other data collection methods or tools to understand value chains and to monitor and evaluate fisheries projects and programs.

The countries also recognized the growing use of market-based trade measures that affect and will further affect fisheries value chains in the region. Awareness of opportunities and challenges that may arise due to market-based measures will be necessary for the private sector as well as fisheries agencies across the region.

***Recommended strategy/actions:***

- Countries should support increased collection of gender-disaggregated data along the value chains and in the implementation of projects and programs and undertake analyses to guide appropriate policies in support of gender equity and equality.

- Countries should incorporate gender equity principles into fisheries legal frameworks and increase implementation of gender-responsive programs/policies along-side efforts targeting vulnerable groups and minorities
- Women's participation in decision-making process and value chain activities along the value chains should be enhance through access to infrastructure/tools, capacity building and enabling frameworks.
- Countries should participate in existing networks of gender and fisheries development
- Support to increased awareness of market-based measures and programs to attain the requirements of markets is required;