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## ASIA-PACIFIC FISHERY COMMISSION

### Executive Commission

### Seventy-sixth Session

Manila, the Philippines, 21-23 February 2017

## INTRODUCTION TO FAO ASIA AND THE PACIFIC'S REGIONAL INITIATIVE FOR BLUE GROWTH

### BACKGROUND TO THE FAO REGIONAL INITIATIVE FOR BLUE GROWTH

1. In order to increase the impact of FAO's program work at regional and national levels, FAO started to employ Regional Initiative -- a new mechanism to implement its new strategic framework since 2013.
2. Due to the importance of industries based on water and water related resources in terms of food security, nutrition, rural livelihood and blue economic development, FAO supported the formulation and implementation of a regional initiative for blue growth in 2014. Constrained by the limited financial resources and other factors, the regional initiative formulated focused solely on aquaculture and titled "Regional initiative on sustainable intensification of aquaculture for blue growth"; although activities related to sustainable management and utilization of other resources to support the blue growth were not excluded.

### FRAMEWORK OF REGIONAL INITIATIVE ON SUSTAINABLE INTENSIFICATION OF AQUACULTURE FOR BLUE GROWTH

3. The goal of this regional initiative was to achieve sustainable growth of Asian Aquaculture, which contributes to food & nutrition security through meeting increasing regional and world demand for fish, poverty alleviation by making aquaculture an attractive and resilient livelihood for blue growth.
4. Specific objectives of the regional initiative were:
  - Improve the utilization efficiency of aquaculture resources
  - Improve production efficiency with reduced impacts on the environment
  - Increase the resilience of farmers and the sector
  - Improve the equity and social acceptability along the aquaculture value chain
5. Major areas of work of the regional initiative included:

- Support member countries in identifying options for addressing key governance issues in achieving sustainable aquaculture growth through appropriate regional and national consultation processes, develop relevant regional and national policies, strategies and action plans
- Increase farmers' adaptability to climate change impact and resilience to natural disasters and socioeconomic risks through development and promote innovative aquaculture management concept and practices;
- Reduce negative environmental and social impacts of aquaculture intensification through promoting innovative farming technologies and management practices, establishing effective aquaculture bio-security and disease surveillance and control system, and applying appropriate planning and management tools and responsible use of resources
- Support the member governments in improving the access of poor rural aquaculture farmers to quality production inputs, sustainable production technologies and markets for improved productivity and economic efficiency
- Improve management of forestry (mangrove), water, land and tenure that will contribute to sustainable intensification of aquaculture (no specific activity has been implemented due to limited funding problem and lack of interest of water, land and forestry sector)

6. The 75<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee welcomed the Regional Initiative on sustainable intensification of aquaculture for blue growth and emphasized its relevance to the APFIC member countries. Under the Regional initiative, various program and projects have been implemented at regional and national levels and delivered substantial outputs contributing to blue growth.

7. The following sections present activities implemented under the current Regional Initiative.

#### **DEVELOPMENT OF A REGIONAL STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE INTENSIFICATION OF AQUACULTURE IN ASIA-PACIFIC**

8. The 5<sup>th</sup> APFIC Regional Consultative Forum Meeting held from 19-21 June 2014 in Hyderabad, India convened an aquaculture session entitled "Promotion of sustainable intensification of aquaculture for food and nutritional security in Asia-Pacific". The Session recommended the development of a regional strategy and action plan which was endorsed by the 33<sup>rd</sup> Session of APFIC. A regional consultation supported by FAO TCP programme was jointly organized by FAO and the Network of Aquaculture Centres (NACA) in Asia-Pacific to take this recommendation forward, which reviewed the draft strategy and action plan prepared by the Secretariat and to get feedback from FAO/NACA Member countries. At the consultation, the regional strategy and action plan were finalized by FAO/APFIC Secretariat and NACA, with inputs from Member countries and consultants. The regional strategy and action plan was finalized, published and disseminated to the member in 34<sup>th</sup> Session of APFIC.

#### **DOCUMENTATION AND DISSEMINATION OF SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES OF SUSTAINABLE INTENSIFICATION OF AQUACULTURE IN ASIA-PACIFIC**

9. The 33<sup>rd</sup> Session of APFIC Commission recommended to support the documentation and sharing of proven technology and successful farming and management practices of sustainable intensification of aquaculture in the region. In this regard, the 75<sup>th</sup> APFIC Executive Committee endorsed the proposal of FAO-funded case studies and a regional consultation to identify and document how sustainable intensification of aquaculture (SIA) contributes to blue growth in the member countries and to promote awareness of successful SIA practices that contribute to blue growth in the region. Successful practice of sustainable intensification of aquaculture was defined as managerial and technical interventions/measures/practices that promote sound environmental benefits, economic viability, farmers' resilience and social acceptance of intensive/semi-intensive aquaculture; while enhancing the productivity and improving resource use efficiency.

10. FAO and NACA jointly completed the documentation of 12 successful practices of SIA through collaboration with member countries that contributed to the identification and documentation of successful practices of sustainable intensification of aquaculture. The documentation was finalized through a FAO/NACA regional expert workshop, which provided comments and suggestions for modifications. The final document “Successful practices of sustainable intensification of aquaculture in Asia-Pacific” is presented at the 34<sup>th</sup> Session of APFIC and later published by FAO<sup>1</sup> and disseminated to the members.

#### **FAO REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON INNOVATIVE RICE-AQUACULTURE IN ASIA-PACIFIC**

11. In order to promote the innovative integrated rice-aquaculture, FAO supported a region workshop for sharing the latest experiences in rice-fish and rice-shrimp development in Asia-Pacific from 16-17 December 2015 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia; coinciding with a national workshop of a demonstration project on innovative rice-fish farming in two provinces of Indonesia supported by the regional initiative.

12. The regional workshop was participated by 25 participants from 14 country governments and NACA and the Pacific Community (SPC). While sharing the experiences and success of FAO-supported innovative rice-fish farming project in Indonesia, the participants presented an update on rice-fish farming status in their respective countries and the perspective of the two regional organizations on rice-fish farming development in the region. More importantly, the workshop participants identified: i) the main trends (areas, technology, species diversification etc.) in rice-fish development in the region; ii) potential/drivers of further expansion and upgrading of rice-fish farming; iii) main gaps for increased practice and contribution of rice-fish farming; and iv) key strategy and recommended actions for promoting rice-fish development at regional and country levels.

#### **PILOTING OF AQUACULTURE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT TOOLS IN SELECTED ASEAN MEMBERS**

13. In order to support improved planning and management of aquaculture, FAO is supporting a regional TCP project to pilot the prioritized aquaculture planning and management tools in three ASEAN member countries. Four aquaculture planning and management tools were prioritized by the three countries (Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam). The complete tool manuals were prepared by the international consultants. Regional training workshops were conducted for the national consultants and key project staff on the selected tools. The country piloting plans were prepared with the technical advice of international consultants. National training on each tool application will be conducted for the ultimate users in each country. Three prioritized tools will be piloted in the field in 2017.

#### **COUNTRY IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE ON SUSTAINABLE INTENSIFICATION OF AQUACULTURE FOR BLUE GROWTH**

14. Since the 75<sup>th</sup> EXCO, the Regional Initiative on sustainable intensification of aquaculture for Blue Growth (RI-SIA-BG) has implemented a significant number of field projects in the focus countries (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste and Vietnam), which were chosen based on the importance of aquaculture sector and the priority of promoting sustainable growth of aquaculture in the government policies. Under the Regional BGI, the following major activities were implemented:

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<sup>1</sup> Sustainable intensification of aquaculture in the Asia-Pacific region: Documentation of successful practices (FAO, 2016)

<b>Bangladesh</b>	Support better aquaculture seed and feed production and management with special focus on public-private partnership Bangladesh Support community-based Climate Resilient Fisheries & Aquaculture Development in Bangladesh Development of national aquaculture strategy
<b>Indonesia</b>	Support integrated economic zone development based on blue economy in Lombok Island, Indonesia Support scaling-up of integrated rice-fish farming and of small-scale aquaponic integrated fish and vegetable culture development
<b>Philippines</b>	Build Capacities for Climate Resilient Tilapia Farming in the Philippines Improve feeding and feed management efficiency in aquaculture production in the Philippines
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	Improve seabass ( <i>Lates calcarifer</i> ) aquaculture in Sri Lanka through better feed and health management Build human resource capacity related to fish genetics and broodstock management in Sri Lanka Develop strategy for aquaculture value chain development for improve income generation of small aquaculture and fish supply to consumers in Sri Lanka
<b>Timor Leste</b>	Conduct feasibility study and pilot demonstration of cage culture of finfish in Timor Leste Develop a GEF project concept “Strengthening the adaptive capacity and resilience of fisheries and aquaculture-dependent livelihoods in Timor-Leste”
<b>Vietnam</b>	Assess of causes and impacts of failed intensive shrimp farming on livelihoods of small farmers and pilot sustainable shrimp farming through organic farming supported with rehabilitation of destroyed mangroves in provinces of Soc Trang and Bac Lieu, Viet Nam

#### **EXPANSION OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE IN 2017 AND ONWARD**

15. The Blue Growth Regional Initiative has been designated as one of the three main delivery mechanisms for implementing FAO’s strategic programme in 2016-2017. The regional initiative is expected to play an important role in implementing FAO’s work at country and regional levels.

16. Following the general recommendations from the 34<sup>th</sup> Session of APRC and the 33<sup>rd</sup> FAO Asia and Pacific Regional Conference (APRC), efforts will be made to further expand the scope of the regional initiative. Following this direction, the Concept Note of the regional initiative is revised with the major changes of removing “sustainable intensification of aquaculture” in the regional initiative title and adjusted outcome-output framework. The refined concept note for the regional initiative for blue growth is provided as information document (APFIC/EXCO/17-INFO XX)

17. The new regional initiative concept note sets the objective to support the member countries in the region to achieve blue economic growth and contribute to relevant Sustainable Development Goals through the sustainable development of aquaculture and capture fisheries and increased ecosystem services as part of broader efforts towards responsible management and efficient use of water related natural resources.

18. The refined Regional initiative for blue growth has four consolidated outcomes:

Outcome 1. Enhanced enabling environments for blue growth at regional and country levels through development and implementation of national and regional strategies addressing priority

issues in different dimensions related to blue growth and related capacity building and awareness raising

Outcome 2. Improved efficiency and sustainability in aquaculture and capture fisheries production through innovative production systems and management practices for more efficient and sustainable use of resources (fisheries, water, land, forest etc.) and restoration of ecosystem services and functions;

Outcome 3. Increased resilience of farmers and fishers and dependent value chains and communities in adapting to climate change impacts and coping with natural and socioeconomic risks; and

Outcome 4. Inclusive and equitable aquaculture and fisheries value chains with special focus on improved access of farmers/fishers to quality production inputs, technology and markets.

19. The identified outcomes will be achieved through the delivery of 16 outputs aligned with the respective outcomes.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE IN 2017 AND ONWARD**

20. Efforts will be made to strengthen inter-sectoral linkages and engagement in the implementation in 2017 and it is expected that activities under the regional initiative will be expanded to capture fisheries, responsible use and management of water, land and forestry that will contribute to the overall blue growth in the region.

21. It is expected that the regional initiative will still be implemented mainly through country level projects in the next biennium; including FAO technical cooperation program (TCP) projects and trust fund projects. While ensuring the quality implementation and delivery of ongoing projects, the member governments are encouraged to identify and prepare country project proposals according to the national priorities and in alignment of the framework of the regional initiative.

22. At the regional level, FAO will use limited regular program resources to support regional activities addressing selected priority issues. The proposed priority areas of work for APFIC under the regional initiative include, but are not limited to, the following three consultative workshops and three regional TCP:

#### **APFIC REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP ON RESPONSIBLE PRODUCTION AND USE OF FEED AND FEED INGREDIENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH OF AQUACULTURE IN ASIA-PACIFIC**

23. APFIC/FAO Regional Consultative workshop on “Responsible production and use of feed and feed ingredients for sustainable growth of aquaculture in Asia-Pacific” will be convened in March 2017 through the collaboration with the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific.

24. This FAO/APFIC/NACA regional workshop will focus on assessment of current status of responsiveness and efficiency in production and use of aquaculture feed and feed ingredients, covering the following thematic areas:

- Development and use of alternatives of fishmeal and other high cost feed ingredients in aquaculture
- Traceability of aquaculture products in relation to feed and feed ingredients
- Promote cost-effective aquaculture feed made of locally available feed ingredients

- Innovation in aquaculture farming and feeding practices for reduced feed costs and environment impacts at farm level

25. The regional consultation is expected to deliver the following major outputs:

- Available knowledge and successful technologies and good management practices related to responsible use of aquaculture feed and feed ingredients are well shared in the region;
- Major issues and technology gaps related to responsible use of aquaculture feed and feed ingredients are well identified;
- Appropriate strategy and follow up actions for promoting responsible use of aquaculture feed and feed ingredients are recommended for the member governments

#### **APFIC REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP ON BUILDING RESILIENCE OF SMALL AQUA-FARMERS AND FISHERS IN ASIA-PACIFIC**

26. The regional consultative workshop will focus on the how to increase the resilience of small aquaculture farmers, fishers, dependent communities and the sector through identifying the key issues in social and economic dimensions and developing appropriate strategies to effectively address the issues. While the advancement of technology is expected to continuously contribute to the sustainable aquaculture growth and capture fisheries in the region, social and economic factors will have more influence on the sustainability of aquaculture and fisheries sector in the region.

27. Aquaculture and fisheries value chain development, equitable benefit sharing, social safety net and gender in aquaculture and fisheries are gaining more importance in supporting sustainable growth of aquaculture and fisheries sector in the region. The Secretariat will make efforts to launch relevant regional studies as the preparation for the regional consultation.

#### **FAO APFIC REGIONAL WORKSHOPS ON SUPPORT TO MEMBER COUNTRIES IN COMBATING IUU and IMPLEMENTING THE PSMA**

28. Under the proposed FAO-APFIC regional program to support member countries in combatting IUU and implementing the PFAO PSMA a series of regional consultations are planned during 2017-2018. A broad range of stakeholders will be consulted and informed during this process (including key resource partners). Planning for the workshops will be undertaken during the project document development phase.

#### **FAO REGIONAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECT TO STRENGTHEN THE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT IN AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT**

29. The strengthening of the planning and management in aquaculture development is still a priority agenda for the region. This responds to the recommendation of the Commission and builds on previous work of APFIC in the last biennium. Country level pilots will be carried out under the FAO regional TCP project "Piloting of aquaculture planning and management tools in selected ASEAN members".

30. A regional workshop will be organized dissemination of the project outputs from the regional TCP.

## **FAO REGIONAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECT SUPPORT SCALING UP OF INNOVATIVE INTEGRATED RICE-AQUACULTURE AND CLIMATE RESILIENT TILAPIA FARMING PRACTICES**

31. Under the new regional initiative, a new regional TCP project will be implemented to support the scaling up of innovative integrated rice-aquaculture and climate resilient tilapia farming practice in 5 regional initiative focus countries (Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam) based on the successful experiences and lessons learnt in the implementation of the regional initiative during 2015-2016. Technical guidelines to innovative integrated rice-aquaculture and climate resilient tilapia farming practice will be developed by the experts and verified through a regional workshop. Training on innovative integrated rice-aquaculture and climate resilient tilapia farming practice will be conducted at regional and national levels. The participating countries will be supported to demonstrate the innovative integrated rice-aquaculture and climate resilient tilapia farming practice as the preparation for scaling up. National strategies and program concept notes for scaling up will be prepared with the project support.

## **FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF FAO REGIONAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECT TO COMBATING IUU FISHING IMPLEMENTATION OF PSMA**

32. APFIC member countries have for many years recognized the importance of addressing IUU and implementing the FAO PSMA in the region.

33. Whilst FAO has for many years supported efforts to combat IUU fishing (including through the work of the Asia Pacific Fisheries Commission (APFIC)) new challenges such as the coming in to force of the FAO PSMA, mean new action and initiatives are required. Specifically, in 2016, FAO member countries requested FAO APRC to priorities work on combatting IUU and implementing PSMA in the region.

34. In response, FAO is in the process of developing a Regional TCP which will achieve its results through a process of strengthening regional cooperation (through a regional partnership, capacity development for countries and regional partners and the provision of policy and legal support). The project will provide close coordination at all levels including the FAO Global Umbrella programme and those of partners in the region to ensure harmonized and effective implementation. Countries will be further supported to develop and implement NPOA-IUU and to implement the FAO PSMA.

35. A broad range of stakeholders will be mobilized in support of the programme (including key resource partners). Further, the project will develop a programme which will coordinate the identification and develop opportunities for partnerships and resource partner contributions to support countries in implementation of these national action plans.

36. Details of the project are outlined in Agenda Item 5 and Working Paper 17/06.

## **INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY PROJECTS SUPPORTING THE BLUE GROWTH**

37. The regional initiative will continue to support the member countries to adopt and scale up innovative aquaculture and fisheries technologies/systems and implement good farming and management practices for improving the sustainability, efficiency and social and ecological benefits through formulating and implementing country TCP projects in the members.

38. The regional initiative will support the member countries in building resilience of small farmers and fishers through implementing and formulating GEF and GCF project for climate change adaptation and mitigation in aquaculture and fisheries sector.

39. The regional initiative will support the member countries in protecting and conserving of inland and marine ecosystems and aquatic biodiversity through implementing GEF project in the member countries.

40. The regional initiative will continue to support the member countries in implementing the Port State Measure Agreement and combating the IUU fishing and assessment and sustainable management of fish stock through formulating and implementing national TCP projects in the member countries.

#### **SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE COMMISSION**

41. The EXCO is invited to comment on the outcomes of the activities undertaken as part of the Regional Blue Growth Initiative and how the ongoing Regional Initiative on Blue Growth could be strengthened to become a regional cooperation programme.

42. The EXCO is further requested to comment on the refined concept note of the regional initiative for blue growth and suggest a strategy for more effective implementation.

43. The EXCO is invited to recommend new potential areas of work under for implementing the Regional initiative for Blue Growth at regional and national levels.