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## **ASIA-PACIFIC FISHERY COMMISSION**

### **Thirty-sixth Session**

**[virtual] Thailand, 5-7 May 2021**

**Report of the Seventy-seventh Session of the Executive Committee  
of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission**

**Chiang Mai, Thailand, 5-7 March 2019**



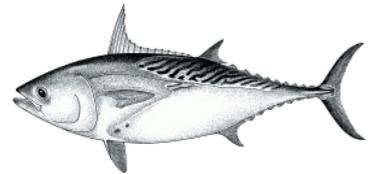
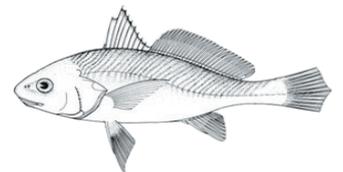
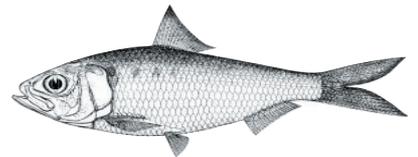
Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

## ASIA-PACIFIC FISHERY COMMISSION (APFIC)

### REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### Seventy-seventh Session

Chiang Mai, Thailand, 5–7 March 2019





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

## **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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*Seventy-seventh Session*

**Chiang Mai, Thailand, 5–7 March 2019**

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## PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the final report adopted at the Seventy-seventh Session of the Executive Committee of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission.

This document presents the final report of the Seventy-seventh Session of the Executive Committee of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) that was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, from 5 to 7 March 2019. The APFIC Executive Committee at its Seventy-seventh Session comprised: Thailand (Chair); China (Vice-Chair); Nepal and the United States of America (members); the Philippines (former Chair); and the Secretary of the Commission (as an ex officio member).

The Executive Committee welcomed an update on the progress made on preparing a regional overview of the status and trends of aquaculture and capture fisheries in Asia and the Pacific region and updates on the frameworks used to monitor the implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

The Executive Committee complimented APFIC on the wide range of activities implemented with its partners and the achievements to date.

The Executive Committee reiterated the importance of the small-scale fisheries related value chains in the region and welcomed continued support for the implementation of the SSF Guidelines at the national and regional levels.

The Executive Committee agreed that IUU fishing was a continuing issue in the APFIC region and for APFIC member countries. It encouraged APFIC members to participate fully in various regional programmes to combat and eliminate IUU fishing that are currently being implemented.

The Executive Committee welcomed the continued efforts to implement the ecosystem approach to fisheries and aquaculture.

The Executive Committee emphasized the need for APFIC to provide a leadership role in the development of guidelines for sustainable aquaculture. The Executive Committee supported current initiatives and work to scale up aquaculture, promote blue growth and address antimicrobial resistance.

The Executive Committee discussed the preparations for the APFIC Eighth Regional Consultative Forum Meeting and the Thirty-sixth Session of the Commission, both to be held in Thailand in March 2020. The Executive Committee accepted the offer from China to convene the Seventy-eighth Session of the Executive Committee.

### **Distribution:**

Participants of the Session  
Members of the Commission  
FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department  
FAO Regional Fishery Officers  
RSN Secretariat



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## Opening of the Session

1. The Executive Committee of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) convened its Seventy-seventh Session at the Kantary Hills Hotel, Chiang Mai, Thailand, from 5 to 7 March 2019, hosted by the Kingdom of Thailand.

2. The Seventy-seventh Session was opened by the Chairperson of APFIC, Mr Bunchong Chumnongsittathum, Deputy Director-General, Department of Fisheries Thailand. He welcomed all the delegates of the Executive Committee and made special mention of the important work of APFIC in the region and the Executive Committee's task of guiding APFIC's work in 2019.

3. Mr Wilfredo Cruz, Regional Director, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Republic of the Philippines, the outgoing Chairperson of APFIC, provided some opening remarks on behalf of the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Philippines. He highlighted that the strength of APFIC has been the enduring effort of like-minded nations, including landlocked nations, to collaborate and share knowledge and information across the region. While acknowledging the importance of the fisheries sector to the region he highlighted that regional production is confronted by various challenges ranging from governance issues, unsustainable fishing and aquaculture practices, to extreme weather conditions. Noting this, he urged APFIC to continue to develop relevant and innovative tools, measures and approaches that will improve our capabilities towards well-managed fisheries and aquaculture sectors, both at the national and regional level.

4. Mr Haiwen Sun, Division Director, International Cooperation Division, Bureau of Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, China, the Vice-Chairperson of APFIC, also delivered welcoming remarks at the opening session. He highlighted the significant mission of APFIC to coordinate its members to promote the sustainable development of regional fisheries and aquaculture, ensure food safety and social and economic development of the region. He noted the significant regional and global challenges that need to be met to ensure that fisheries remain sustainable and to rebuild those fisheries that are considered to be overexploited. Using China as an example, he described the need for the further development of fisheries, especially aquaculture, to improve people's nutrition and to promote rural economies. He encouraged the Executive Committee to continue its good work.

5. FAO-RAP Senior Fishery Officer Mr Simon Nicol's welcoming remarks noted the particular importance of fisheries and aquaculture in the region and globally. He also noted the importance of APFIC in supporting its members in their efforts to manage fisheries resources sustainably and to achieve the sustainable intensification of aquaculture. He noted that the deliberations of the Executive Committee will provide recommendations and advice for the Secretariat and the FAO Asia-Pacific Regional Conference on priority areas of work for the coming year.

6. The opening/welcome remarks are included as Appendix 1, Appendix 2, Appendix 3 and Appendix 4.

7. The APFIC Secretary, Mr Simon Nicol, welcomed the members of the Executive Committee and observers and reminded the Committee of its functions as an advisory body whose main responsibility is to assist in the work of the Commission and the Secretariat during the inter-sessional period. The specific functions of the Executive Committee are twofold: to advise on the biennial work programme, both ongoing and proposed, and to review the administrative and budgetary affairs of the Commission.

8. The Executive Committee was requested to develop recommendations and suggestions for the Agenda of the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission and, more specifically, advise the Secretariat on how it might continue to facilitate APFIC to implement its work plan. The APFIC Secretary reminded the Executive Committee that the report of the Seventy-seventh Session would only document the main conclusions and recommendations emerging from the deliberations of the Executive Committee.

### **Adoption of the agenda of the meeting**

9. No modifications to the provisional agenda of the meeting were proposed and the Executive Committee adopted the agenda shown in Appendix 5.

10. The meeting documents (working documents and information documents) provided to the Committee are listed in Appendix 6.

11. The Chairperson invited all the meeting participants to introduce themselves. The list of participants is presented in Appendix 7.

12. The main recommendations of the Thirty-fifth APFIC Session and items for the attention of the Thirty-fourth Asia-Pacific Regional Conference were presented.

13. The Executive Committee was also informed of the recommendations of the Seventh Regional Consultative Forum Meeting (RCFM) by the Secretary. The Executive Committee requested that for future meetings the Secretariat provide the Executive Summary from each meeting.

### **APFIC inter-sessional activities – a summary**

14. The Secretariat introduced Working Paper APFIC:EXCO/19/01 “Summary of the inter-sessional activities” and invited the Executive Committee to comment on it.

15. The Executive Committee expressed appreciation of the work of the Secretariat, which covered a broad range of activities and was a good reflection of the heterogeneous needs of the fisheries and aquaculture sector at the regional and country levels. The Executive Committee encouraged APFIC to work further to meet the full expectations of the members.

16. The Executive Committee noted that the APFIC website had not been updated recently. It **requested** that the Secretariat work with those responsible in FAO to update the material and ensure that all links are working. The website is the public face of APFIC and is the primary access point to APFIC materials for members and it needs to be user friendly.

### **APFIC inter-sessional activities – improving monitoring of trends and issues**

17. The Executive Committee discussed ongoing efforts to improve monitoring of trends and issues in fisheries and aquaculture of the Commission based on Working Papers APFIC:EXCO/19/02, APFIC:EXCO/19/03, APFIC:EXCO/19/04 and Information Papers APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/04, APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/05, APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/06, APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/17, and APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/18.

18. The Executive Committee welcomed the update on the progress made to complete the regional overview on the status and trends of aquaculture and capture fisheries in Asia and the Pacific region. This includes final publication of the overview that used data up to 2014 in addition to the preparation of the most recent version of the overview.

19. The Executive Committee recognized the constraint that the overview primarily utilizes data submitted to the FAO by members and this normally means that the data is two or three years old at the time of production. The Executive Committee noted that fisheries (in every dimension) are changing rapidly in the Asia-Pacific region and consequently the information presented in the overview at the time of publication may not necessarily be an accurate reflection of the current situation in the region. The Executive Committee **recommended** that the Secretariat investigate the feasibility of providing some of the overview information electronically as this may allow more recent information to be provided and avoid the two-year lag that currently exists and to report options back to the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission.

20. The Executive Committee noted that the current overview includes chapters on current issues in fisheries and aquaculture and **recommended** that this be expanded to include emerging issues for the region. Noting that horizon scanning (of emerging issues) would be beneficial for APFIC planning and could require a larger investment (at least initially), the Executive Committee suggested that the Secretariat investigate whether a White Paper might be a better option for the first horizon scanning exercise. The Executive Committee noted that this should be a collaborative exercise with APFIC members.

21. The Executive Committee identified that information on market demands and fishery commodity forecasts were current gaps in the overview. The Executive Committee **recommended** that the Secretariat investigate what immediate options were available to address these gaps and report back to the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission. The Executive Committee asked that this investigation include options for training members in market demand analyses. Training in market analyses was considered useful and necessary for promoting future investment in aquaculture.

22. The Executive Committee **recommended** the Secretariat to investigate further the explanation for the increase in “nei” or “not elsewhere included” statistics in the capture fisheries overview. The Executive Committee reiterated the APFIC position that fisheries monitoring data should be collected and provided to FAO at the highest possible resolution.

23. The Executive Committee noted the analysis of the APFIC consolidated responses to the 2018 FAO questionnaire on the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (the Code). The Executive Committee thanked FAO for a well-designed survey that was easy to interpret for APFIC members. The Executive Committee noted that the analysis of the survey provides a useful comparison of APFIC performance against its peers. In response to a question from the Secretariat on the priority of this analysis for presentation at the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission, the Executive Committee noted that although useful, the analysis should be a lower priority than other work on trends and issues. The Executive Committee **recommended** that as a minimum the current analysis be reported to the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission. If possible, it requested that some verification occur with regard to responses to some of the questions to which members may have responded positively because of international arrangements (for example, regional fisheries management organizations’ conservation and management measures) but actual national arrangements may be weaker. The Executive Committee was concerned that if this was the case it may be presenting an overly positive perspective on APFIC performance.

24. The need for guidance on monitoring the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF Guidelines) was noted. This included guidance on defining small-scale fisheries within each country, and support to national-level efforts to achieve and report on the Sustainable Development Goal Target 14b (SDG 14b), relating specifically to small-scale fisheries. The Executive Committee **recommended** that a workshop (or training event) on SDG 14b reporting would be beneficial for the region. The Secretary agreed to prepare the terms of reference for such a workshop for APFIC to consider.

## **APFIC inter-sessional activities – Committee on Fisheries (COFI)**

25. The Executive Committee reviewed the activities related to the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) presented by the Secretary in Working Paper APFIC:EXCO/19/05 (COFI report), APFIC:EXCO/19/14 (aquaculture sub-committee report) and APFIC:EXCO/19/15 (summary for APFIC).

26. The Executive Committee noted the initiatives on monitoring the implementation of the SSF Guidelines, welcomed the global study on transshipment, reiterated the need for in-depth studies to support the development of guidelines on best practices for regulating, monitoring and controlling transshipment, and supported the development of best practices for the management of inland fisheries.

27. The Executive Committee reiterated that promoting and facilitating sustainable aquaculture development is a top priority in this region and emphasized the importance of the development of guidelines for sustainable aquaculture. It noted that the Asia-Pacific region was the centre of aquaculture development and application globally. In this context, the Executive Committee considers it a priority that representatives from APFIC actively participate in the development of the guidelines and provide leadership during FAO level discussions. The Secretary was **requested** to investigate the role that APFIC can provide in drafting the guidelines.

## **APFIC inter-sessional activities – actions supporting member countries to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing**

28. The Executive Committee reviewed the activities related to supporting member countries in combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing including those at global, regional and national level presented by the Secretary in Working Paper APFIC:EXCO/19/06 and Information Paper APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/08.

29. The Executive Committee agreed that combating IUU fishing was a priority issue for the region and for APFIC member countries to support initiatives to combat IUU fishing in the region. Although members encouraged initiatives to address IUU fishing in inland fisheries, some members suggested that the focus should be on addressing IUU fishing in transboundary river fisheries and marine fisheries.

30. The Executive Committee supported the FAO regional Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) project to strengthen APFIC members' capacity to combat IUU fishing. The project outputs include enhanced regional cooperation in support of addressing IUU fishing and the implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) and strengthened national capacity for the implementation of the International Plan of Action to Deter, Prevent and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing and the PSMA. The Executive Committee **recommended** that the outcomes of the project be reported to the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission.

31. The Executive Committee noted the importance of sharing experiences among countries in the region whose planning and implementation efforts to combat IUU fishing may differ significantly. The Executive Committee **recommended** that the Secretary provide a preliminary review of the national and international arrangements for combating and eliminating IUU fishing for each APFIC member for presentation at the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission. This would provide a basis for APFIC to prioritize the next steps to assist members to improve their capacity to combat and eliminate IUU fishing. The Executive Committee suggested that members have the opportunity to comment and contribute to the Working Paper prior to the Commission meeting.

32. The Executive Committee supported the FAO regional TCP project to update the regional review of IUU fishing. The Executive Committee **encouraged** all members to participate in this project. In particular, the Executive Committee **requested** that participating countries assist to the extent possible with the proposed surveys of government and industry experts on combating IUU fishing. The Executive Committee noted that the presentation in a public report of geo-locational information is often a sensitive issue. In addition, as the nature of the activity indicated is illegal and as the information is thus difficult to obtain, it is very important to be clear about the methodologies used to collect and analyze the data. In this regard the Executive Committee **recommended**:

- The project team should communicate to participating countries that a task of the project is to identify geographic areas where there is a higher likelihood of IUU fishing activity and species that are likely to be impacted by such activity. The intent is not to identify particular countries or operators.
- The project team should work closely with the FAO (RAP and headquarters) to the extent practical to apply methods that are consistent with other regional and global initiatives. These methods are to be clearly described and presented to the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission.
- The project team should work closely with participating countries to ensure they review and critique outcomes before any broader dissemination of results. The project team should ensure that all confidentiality requirements are met in this context.
- The Secretary should work with the project team to present results at the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission that are consistent with the needs of participating countries. In this context the Committee suggests that a dashboard approach where different aggregations of the results can be provided (as determined by the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission) would be ideal.
- The project team should include Southeast Asia in its review of IUU fishing estimates in the region.

33. The Executive Committee noted that the current work is focused predominately on the illegal aspects of IUU fishing and the unreported and unregulated fishing aspects required greater attention. The Committee considers that information and communication technology (ICT) initiatives may be a way to improve the unreported aspect. Assistance for member countries to address the unregulated aspects of IUU fishing is warranted and should be a priority of current and future work.

### **APFIC inter-sessional activities – fisheries management and promotion of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management**

34. The Executive Committee welcomed the report by the Secretariat on the progress made to support member countries and partners to implement the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) (APFIC:EXCO/19/07 and APFIC:EXCO/19/INFO/09).

35. The Executive Committee reiterated past guidance on the importance of sharing EAF experiences. Promoting regional platforms to share EAF knowledge and experiences should continue to be a priority and promoted by APFIC.

36. The Executive Committee recognized the value of continuing the EAF-Nansen Programme to establish time-series fisheries resources and oceanographic data and workshops on their synthesis and analyses for the application of EAF. It **requested** the Secretariat to report to the 36th Session of the Commission on plans for its continuation.

37. The Executive Committee **recommended** a technical workshop to review and share the knowledge gained about EAF from the implementation of the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) project. This could be considered an activity supported by the proposed Global Environment Facility (GEF) BOBLME project currently in development.

38. The Executive Committee welcomed the progress report on the project: “Fisheries co-management towards development impacts in Asia—a summary of existing knowledge and case studies: Bangladesh, Philippines, Cambodia, Sri Lanka”. The Executive Committee **recommended** presentation of the results of this project to the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission.

39. The Executive Committee noted the need to intersect both EAF theory and practice in training activities and welcomed the initiatives of the United States of America in partnership with SEAFDEC to develop training material on the applied ecosystem approach to fisheries.

40. The Executive Committee noted that APFIC:EXCO/19/INFO/09 included an error, namely referring to Taiwan rather than Taiwan Province of China in the text. The Secretariat noted that a revision to the Information Paper would be made before any distribution outside of the current meeting.

### **APFIC inter-sessional activities – introduction to FAO regional initiative on blue growth in the Asia-Pacific region**

41. The Secretariat provided to the Executive Committee a summary of the recent progress on the regional initiative for blue growth in the Asia-Pacific region with reference to Working Paper APFIC:EXCO/19/08 and Information Papers APFIC:EXCO/19/INFO/10, APFIC:EXCO/19/INFO/11, APFIC:EXCO/19/INFO/12 and APFIC:EXCO/19/INFO/13.

42. The Executive Committee noted the wide range of activities implemented under the regional blue growth initiative and the achievements to date and emphasized its support for initiatives to scale up sustainable aquaculture in particular (for example scaling up of mangrove-friendly aquaculture). Improving income security is an important priority for sustainable fisheries and initiatives that encourage “innovative and integrated agriculture” such as those that utilize agricultural waste in aquaculture (for example rice–fish farming) were welcomed.

43. The Executive Committee recognized the role of the regional blue growth initiative in advocating the value of ocean and inland water resources and its focus on improved efficiency and sustainability in the use of aquatic resources – producing more with less – to contribute to food and nutrition security, livelihoods and economic growth.

44. The Committee noted the need to increase opportunities for practitioners and technical advisers to share knowledge and **recommended** APFIC pursue opportunities for knowledge sharing.

45. The Executive Committee also noted and welcomed the expansion of the regional blue growth initiative: from efficient aquaculture production through innovations in fisheries more broadly and building resilience to climate and other external effects.

### **APFIC inter-sessional activities – antimicrobial resistance (AMR)**

46. The Secretariat introduced the FAO regional initiative for antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the Asia-Pacific region to the Executive Committee with reference to Working Paper APFIC:EXCO/19/09 and Information Papers APFIC:EXCO/19/INFO/14 and APFIC:EXCO/19/INFO/15.

47. The Executive Committee noted progress on this issue and the seriousness of the threat of AMR to human and animal health. The Executive Committee welcomed opportunities for APFIC to collaborate and work closely with initiatives on this topic.

### **APFIC inter-sessional activities – information and communication technologies (ICT)**

48. The Secretariat reported to the Executive Committee on the progress associated with information and communication technologies (ICT) with reference to Working Paper APFIC:EXCO/19/10 and Information Paper APFIC:EXCO/19/INFO/07.

49. The Executive Committee noted the progress made on this issue and welcomed the presentation of the results of the “Regional report on the use of ICT to support small-scale fisheries in Asia” at the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission. It also welcomed a report on the outcomes of the Information and Communication Technology for Small-Scale Fisheries (ICT4SSF) Global Conference to be held in July 2019 to the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission.

50. The Executive Committee reiterated the role that ICT applications could have for combating the “unreported” aspects of IUU fishing and encouraged further work in this area. It was noted that the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Ocean Partnership Project, which has focused on ICT applications for small-scale fisheries in the Asia-Pacific region, will terminate in September 2019 and an invitation to USAID to present to the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission the lessons learned from the five years of implementing this project would be beneficial to APFIC members. The Secretariat was **requested** to discuss options with USAID for presentation of this material at the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission. The Executive Committee also noted that there are many other ICT projects being undertaken in the region, funded by governments, foundations and NGOs. Allocating time at the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission to present these projects would be valuable for APFIC members. The Executive Committee noted that this might require the invitation of experts to the Commission meeting.

### **APFIC inter-sessional activities – other items**

51. The Executive Committee reviewed the ongoing and planned activities relating to building resilience to climate change in fisheries and aquaculture based on Working Paper APFIC:EXCO/19/11.

52. The Executive Committee noted the current work efforts in documenting climate change impacts and vulnerabilities as well as the adaptation and greenhouse gas mitigation priorities within the sector. The need to ensure representation of the sector in national climate change strategies and implementation plans was underscored and the Executive Committee welcomed the continued support of the FAO in this area.

### **APFIC work plan for 2018–2019**

53. The Secretariat introduced the APFIC work plan for 2018–2019 to the Executive Committee with reference to Working Paper APFIC:EXCO/19/12.

54. The Executive Committee noted that progress was on track and endorsed the APFIC work plan for 2019 as proposed by the Secretariat.

55. In addition, the Executive Committee **requested** that the Secretariat continue to initiate opportunities to advance the scaling up of aquaculture throughout 2019. It also **requested** that the Secretariat explore opportunities for the provision of opportunities for training in national and regional analyses of market demand particularly as it applies to aquaculture.

## The 2018–2023 APFIC Strategic Plan

56. The Executive Committee discussed the implementation of the 2018–2023 APFIC Strategic Plan (APFIC:EXCO/19/13).

57. The Executive Committee agreed that the strategic plan provides general guidance for the work of the Commission over a five to ten years timeframe. The Executive Committee noted that the operational goals should be updated periodically (within the life of the plan) to ensure that the document remains current and useful. In this context the Executive Committee proposed that the current operational goals for aquaculture and fisheries to be supported by APFIC, its member countries and partners in the region be **modified** as follows:

- improving and renewing the collaborative functioning of APFIC;
- formalizing regional partnerships;
- promoting sustainable aquaculture;
- improving fishery (including inland) and aquaculture ecosystems and habitats, including addressing pollution, invasive species, fishing gear and climate change;
- supporting small-scale fisheries (marine and inland) and aquaculture and a human rights-based approach to fisheries development;
- combating IUU fishing;
- promoting actions and policies that improve seafood traceability and minimize seafood fraud, including auditing of existing measures and actions;
- improving fish food safety, fish value chains and fish trade; and
- promoting aquatic biodiversity of inland ecosystems.

## APFIC budget and administrative matters

58. The Executive Committee discussed this agenda item referring to Working Document APFIC:EXCO/19/12.

59. The Secretary reported the financial status of the Commission, the levels of co-finance leveraged for Commission activities in the last biennium, including the expected resourcing over the coming year. The Secretary noted that the 2019 budget presented was not yet finalized but could be considered the minimum for 2019.

60. The Secretary drew attention to the fact that FAO internal planning processes had changed and that earmarked funds were no longer allocated to the FAO Regional Commissions at the start of the biennia. In addition, the APFIC biennial work plan does not coincide with the FAO Regular Programme financial planning.

61. The Secretary explained that it had been requested to explore amendments to the administrative arrangements for APFIC.

62. The first request was to explore opportunities for co-funding of APFIC forums. This would entail evaluating administrative options for creating and generating trust accounts that could be used to support APFIC member or invited guest attendance at APFIC meetings and events.

63. The second request was to explore what administrative arrangements would need to be made in order for APFIC to act as a coordinating or executing body for regional initiatives and programmes.

64. The Executive Committee **requested** the Secretary to prepare a Working Paper on each request describing the options, administrative mechanisms and changes that would need to be made

to APFIC to meet both requests. These Working Papers should be presented to the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission to facilitate further discussion by the Commission on such arrangements.

## **Preparation for the Eighth APFIC Regional Consultative Forum Meeting and the Thirty-sixth Session of APFIC Commission**

65. The Executive Committee was requested to provide guidance on the agenda for the Eighth APFIC Regional Consultative Forum Meeting (RCFM) and arrangements for the Thirty-sixth Session of the Commission in 2020.

66. The Executive Committee agreed that the venue of the Eighth RCFM and the Thirty-sixth Session of the Commission would be Bangkok, Thailand in March 2020. The exact dates and location within Bangkok are to be determined in the coming months. The Executive Committee expected that, as in the past, these two events would be three days each and run back-to-back over a period of six or seven days at the same venue.

67. The Executive Committee agreed that the Agenda for the 8th RCFM and 36th Session of the APFIC Commission would include a focus on “Resolving illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in small-scale (marine and inland) fisheries in the Asia-Pacific region”.

68. The Secretary advised the Executive Committee that the agenda would also reflect the ongoing work of the Commission under its current work plan in addition to a focus on the above theme.

### **Other matters**

69. The Executive Committee requested that the Secretariat undertake an analysis of recent participation in APFIC by its members and to approach irregularly participating members to encourage their future participation. The Secretariat was also requested to consult with irregular participants to identify the reasons for lack of participation. The Secretariat was asked to report back on these consultations to the 36th Session of the APFIC Commission.

### **Date and place of the Seventy-eighth Session of the APFIC Executive Committee**

70. In accordance with precedent, the delegate of China, the Vice-Chair of APFIC proposed tentatively that China host the Seventy-eighth Session of the APFIC Executive Committee in 2021. The venue and date to be determined.

71. The Executive Committee welcomed the proposal of China for the Seventy-eighth Session of the APFIC Executive Committee.

### **Adoption of the report**

72. The Committee adopted the report of the Seventy-seventh Session of the Executive Committee on 7 March 2019 at 11.16 hours.

## **Appendix 1 – Opening address: Chairperson of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission**

### **OPENING STATEMENT**

#### **Mr Bunchong Chumnongsittathum**

Deputy Director General of the Department of Fisheries of Thailand  
The 77th Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission, 5 March 2019, Chiang Mai, Thailand

The APFIC Executive Committee, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

First of all, it is indeed my great pleasure and honour to be here today as the Chair of the 77th Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission Executive Committee. On behalf of the Government of Kingdom of Thailand, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all the participants to Chiang Mai, one of the most beautiful cities of the Kingdom of Thailand.

Ladies and gentlemen:

All of you may be aware that the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission or APFIC was established as the Asia-Pacific Fisheries Council in 1948 and is one of the longest established regional fishery bodies of the world.

We know that the most significant role of APFIC is acting as a Regional Consultative Forum that works in partnership with other regional organizations and the members to promote and recommend measures to increase the efficiency and sustainable productivity of fisheries and aquaculture in the Asia-Pacific region.

Concerning the main purpose of the 77th APFIC EXCO, this three-day Meeting will allow the Executive Committee to discuss the inter-sessional activities, including promotion of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management, regional initiatives on blue growth, antimicrobial resistance, ICT for the improvement of small-scale fisheries, and combating IUU fishing. Furthermore, the APFIC EXCO will also review and make a decision on the Programme of Work, the roadmap to 2018–2023, the APFIC budget and administrative issues, and the APFIC strategy as proposed by the Secretariat.

Ladies and gentlemen:

On behalf of the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand, as the Chair of the Meeting, I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to the Secretariat team from the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific for their hard work in organizing this three-day Meeting, as well as for providing all the documents for discussion and preparing the report of the meeting. I am sure that the 77th Session of APFIC EXCO Meeting will come up with fruitful results with active participation from all the members of the Executive Committee.

Lastly:

On behalf of the host country, I sincerely hope all of you will be comfortable and full of memorable impressions during your stay in Chiang Mai, Thailand and hope that the 77th Session of APFIC Executive Committee Meeting will be successful in all respects.

Thank you

## **Appendix 2 – Welcome address: Outgoing Chairperson of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission**

**Eduardo B. Gongona**

Undersecretary for Fisheries, Department of Agriculture (DA)  
National Director, DA-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources

Delivered by

WILFREDO CRUZ

Regional Director for Central Luzon

DA-Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, San Fernando City, Pampanga

ASIA-PACIFIC FISHERY COMMISSION

Executive Committee

Seventy-seventh Session

Chiang Mai, Thailand, 5–7 March 2019

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, good morning!

On behalf of the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources of the Philippines, I would like to convey our sincere thanks to UN FAO Philippines, UN FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and APFIC member countries for the partnership and support extended to the successful Chairmanship of the Philippines of the 76th Asia-Pacific Fisheries Commission Executive Committee and hosting of the 35th Session of APFIC.

Truly APFIC is an enduring effort of like-minded nations, since its inception sometime in 1948, in the Philippines, after a crop of visionary representatives of UN FAO member countries hatched the idea of forming perhaps the “mother of all” regional fishery bodies in the Asia-Pacific region. It was originally called the Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council.

We are pleased to see that fellow founding states such as the United States of America and the People’s Republic of China are also present in this Meeting. We are especially glad to note that the membership of APFIC has grown and now includes landlocked nations such as Nepal. And probably soon it will include Bhutan. This shows that APFIC remains a relevant dialogue and partnership platform in the development of fisheries and aquaculture in our region.

The fisheries sector of the Asia-Pacific region has been widely recognized as one of the important sectors providing substantial contributions to food security and the economies the region and the entire world. However, the aquatic resource base and its ecosystems, the very source of the sector’s production is confronted by various challenges ranging from ineffective governance, unsustainable fishing and aquaculture practices, to extreme weather conditions.

APFIC member states are urged to cooperate in developing relevant and innovative tools, measures and approaches that will improve our capabilities to manage the fisheries and aquaculture sectors sustainably at the national and regional level.

The leadership of the APFIC Secretariat through the UN FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific has played an important role over the years in the work of APFIC. On behalf of APFIC member states, we would like to give you our highest assurances of our support for the coming Session.

We would also like to congratulate the Kingdom of Thailand and the People's Republic of China as our Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively in the 77th Executive Session and 36th Session of APFIC.

The warm and excellent arrangements prepared for us by our gracious host, the Kingdom of Thailand is likewise appreciated.

Finally, we can always draw inspiration from the long-standing partnership of APFIC member states to forge stronger cooperation and further our mutual goal of sustainable fishery development of our nations and the region as a whole.

Maraming Salamat Po!

Mabuhay and APFIC!

### **Appendix 3 – Welcome address: Vice-chair of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission**

#### **Mr Haiwen Sun**

Division Director, International Cooperation Division, Bureau of Fisheries,  
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, China

Your Excellency Mr Chairperson of APFIC, the outgoing Chairperson, the Executive Secretary of APFIC, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

Good morning! I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude towards FAO for inviting China to attend the 77th Session of APFIC Executive Committee, especially for the opportunity to say some words in the capacity of Vice-Chair. I am also very grateful to the Thai Government for the warm hospitality and considerate arrangements.

To begin with, on behalf of the Chinese Government, I would like to extend our congratulations on the elaborate preparations for and the successful opening of this Meeting. The fisheries industry plays an important role in reducing poverty, starvation and malnutrition. Millions of people in the world live on fisheries including aquaculture, which offers considerable support for the social and economic development of many developing nations. APFIC assumes the significant mission of coordinating its members to promote the sustainable development of regional fisheries and aquaculture, ensure food safety and the social and economic development of the region. However today's world lacks optimism about our economic prospects, about the spread of protectionism, threats to food safety, climate change, decline of fishery resources and IUU fishing. APFIC is facing increasingly onerous tasks. I believe that our two-and-half-day's discussions, we will enable us to find the right orientation for our efforts.

In China, the development of fisheries, especially aquaculture, has improved our people's nutritional structure and helped the rural economy in China to prosper. As a result, a large volume of aquaculture exports contributes greatly to the global supply of aquatic products, food safety and poverty reduction. In 2018, the total volume of aquatic products amounted to 64.69 million tonnes, and the contribution of aquaculture accounted for more than 77 percent. Despite the outstanding progress, China is also facing many challenges to the sustainable development of fisheries. Recently, China has focused its energy on promoting innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development. To accelerate the transformation and upgrading of the fishery industry, our fishery authority is taking measures including green development of aquaculture, integrated rice-fish culture, fisheries resource release and enhancement, marine ranching, a pilot quota system, regulation of overseas fisheries, fighting against IUU fishing, and more. China is very glad to exchange and share knowledge and experiences with APFIC members to promote the sustainable development of regional fisheries and aquaculture.

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, as China will be the Chair of the 78th Session of APFIC Executive Committee, we warmly welcome all of you to China in 2021.

Finally, I wish the 77th Session of Executive Committee success and fruitfulness. Thank you!

## **Appendix 4 – Welcome remarks: FAO**

**Simon Nicol**

Senior Fishery Officer, FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

On behalf of Ms Kundhavi Kadiresan, Assistant Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, I warmly welcome you all to the Seventy-seventh Session of the Executive Committee of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC).

Fisheries and aquaculture contribute significantly to food and nutrition security and to the livelihoods of millions of people around the world.

Almost one billion people are dependent on these sectors with about one quarter billion people relying on the value chain – from harvesting to distribution and consumption. The Asia-Pacific region is home to approximately 87 percent of people with fisheries and aquaculture-based livelihoods.

In recent years capture fisheries production has been estimated to be approaching full exploitation. This means that the management of fish stocks requires greater precision to avoid overexploitation and ensure they are resilient to the degrading impacts of marine pollution, habitat modification and climate change. At the same time, production from aquaculture has been rising steadily, and is now supplying more than half the seafood consumed in the region. Continuing to develop sustainable aquaculture will be necessary to continue to meet the region's needs for food security, nutrition and to meet global demands for fishery products.

The Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission has a key role in supporting its members in their efforts to manage fisheries resources sustainably. As a Regional Consultative Forum, and in its role as a neutral forum, it works in partnership with other regional organizations and arrangements and its members. It provides advice, coordinates activities and acts as an information broker to increase knowledge of fisheries and aquaculture in the Asia-Pacific region to underpin decision making and provide a voice to the fishery and aquaculture subsectors and those who depend upon them.

This Executive Committee of APFIC is an important advisory body, assisting the work of the Commission and the Secretariat during the inter-sessional period. The functions of the Executive Committee are principally to review progress on the recommendations of the previous Session of the Commission, advise on the biennial work programme, both ongoing and proposed, and to review the administrative and budgetary affairs of the Commission.

The agenda items you will be discussing reflect their relevance and the importance that FAO and the Secretariat place on these issues.

Deliberations in the coming days will also provide key conclusions, recommendations and advice for the Secretariat on its work planning for the coming year.

In addition, and as part of FAO's efforts to align its work with the priorities of its members, you will be instrumental in helping identify concerns that need to be brought to the attention of the Thirty-sixth Session of the APFIC Commission.

On behalf of FAO, please also allow me to take this opportunity to acknowledge our hosts, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Department of Fisheries and their dedicated staff who have worked very hard to organize and convene this meeting.

Lastly, I thank you all for your participation and look forward to your contributions to help the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission continue to perform its crucial function as a regional advisory body in fisheries and aquaculture owned by its member countries.

## Appendix 5 – Agenda of the Seventy-seventh Executive Committee Meeting

TUESDAY, 5 MARCH 2019	
08.30–09.00	Registration
09.00–09.40	Opening of the Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening statement by the APFIC Chairperson</li> <li>• Welcome address by the outgoing APFIC Chairperson</li> <li>• Welcome comments from the APFIC Vice-Chairperson</li> <li>• Welcome remarks from FAO RAP</li> </ul>
09.40–10.00	Adoption of the agenda and meeting arrangements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the Seventy-Seventh Executive Committee by the Secretary of APFIC</li> </ul>
09.40–10.00	Adoption of the agenda and meeting arrangements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of agenda</li> <li>• Introduction of participants</li> <li>• Meeting arrangements</li> </ul>
10.00–10.30	Group photo Coffee/tea break
10.30–10.45	<b>Agenda Item 1</b> Outcomes of the 35th APFIC Session and items for the attention of the 34th Asia-Pacific Regional Conference <i>(for discussion and decision)</i>
10.45–12.30	<b>Agenda Item 2</b> Inter-sessional activities of APFIC and ongoing work <i>(for discussion)</i> 2.1 <i>Summary of inter-sessional activities</i> 2.2 <i>Monitoring of trends and issues</i> 2.3 <i>Report on outcome of COFI</i>
12.30–14.00	Lunch break
14.00–15.00	<b>Agenda Item 2 (continued)</b> Inter-sessional activities of APFIC and ongoing work <i>(for discussion)</i> 2.4 <i>IUU fishing</i> 2.5 <i>Fisheries management and promotion of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management</i>
15.00–15.30	Coffee/tea break
15.30–16.30	<b>Agenda Item 2 (continued)</b> Inter-sessional activities of APFIC and ongoing work <i>(for discussion)</i> 2.6 <i>Implementation of regional initiative on blue growth</i> 2.7 <i>Antimicrobial resistance</i> 2.8 <i>ICT for improvement of fisheries management</i> 2.9 <i>Other items</i>

16.30–17.00	<b>Agenda Item 3</b> Proposed APFIC work plan for 2019–2020 and related resource mobilization <i>(for information and discussion)</i>
<b>WEDNESDAY, 6 MARCH 2019</b>	
09.00–09.30	<b>Agenda Item 4</b> Presentation of APFIC strategy 2018–2023 <i>(for discussion and decision)</i>
09.30–10.00	<b>Agenda Item 5</b> APFIC budget and financing and administrative review <i>(for discussion)</i>
10.00–10.30	<b>Agenda Item 6</b> Preparations for the 8th RCFM and 36th APFIC Session <i>(for discussion and decision)</i>
10.30–11.00	Coffee/tea break
11.00–11.30	<b>Agenda Item 7</b> Any other matters
11.30–12.00	<b>Agenda Item 8</b> Date and Place of the 36th Session of the APFIC and the 78th Executive Committee
12.00–14.00	Lunch break
14.00 –17.00	Preparation of the Executive Committee report by the Secretariat
<b>THURSDAY, 7 MARCH 2019</b>	
09.00–12.00	Adoption of the report
12.00–13.30	Lunch break
14.00	Departure of participants

## **Appendix 6 – List of documents**

### **A. Working documents**

APFIC:EXCO/19/01	Summary of inter-sessional activities
APFIC:EXCO/19/02	Overview – Capture Fisheries
APFIC:EXCO/19/03	Overview – Aquaculture
APFIC:EXCO/19/04	Reporting on the implementation of the Code of Conduct for responsible Fisheries
APFIC:EXCO/19/05	Report of the 33rd Session of the Committee on Fisheries (Rome, 9–12 July 2018)
APFIC:EXCO/19/06	Update on activities in support of addressing illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
APFIC:EXCO/19/07	Fisheries management and promotion of the ecosystem approach to fisheries management
APFIC:EXCO/19/08	Promote scaling up of innovative and climate-resilient aquaculture systems
APFIC:EXCO/19/09	Support members to address antimicrobial resistance associated with aquaculture in Asia-Pacific region
APFIC:EXCO/19/10	Information and communications technologies for the improvement of fisheries management
APFIC:EXCO/19/11	Building climate-resilient fisheries and aquaculture in the Asia-Pacific region – follow up
APFIC:EXCO/19/12	APFIC work plan and budget
APFIC:EXCO/19/13	Follow up to APFIC’s 2018–2023 Strategic Plan
APFIC:EXCO/19/14	Report of the Ninth Session of the Sub-committee on Aquaculture
APFIC:EXCO/19/15	Thirty-third Session of Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and Ninth Session of COFI-Sub-committee on Aquaculture

### **B. Information documents**

APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/01	Provisional list of documents
APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/02	Provisional list of participants
APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/03	Report of the Thirty-fifth Session of Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission, Cebu, the Philippines, 11–13 May 2018
APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/04	Consolidated responses by APFIC members to the 2018 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries questionnaire
APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/05	Regional statistical analysis of responses by FAO members to the 2018 questionnaire on the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and Related Instruments
APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/06	SDG 14 indicators under FAO custodianship
APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/07	Proposed methodology for a regional report on the use of information and communication technologies to support small-scale fisheries in Asia
APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/08	Considerations for regional IUU fishing report

- APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/09 Proposed outline for a regional report on fisheries co-management towards development impacts in Asia
- APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/10 Promote scaling-up of innovative rice-fish farming and climate-resilient tilapia pond culture practices for blue growth in Asia
- APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/11 Promote scaling-up of climate-resilient tilapia pond culture practices for blue growth in Bangladesh
- APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/12 Promote scaling-up of rice-fish farming in Indonesia
- APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/13 Support scaling-up of integrated mangrove shrimp farming in Southern Viet Nam
- APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/14 Report on FAO regional consultation and related study on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) risk to aquaculture in Asia
- APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/15 Support mitigation of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) risk associated with aquaculture in Asia
- APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/16 List of papers related to agenda items
- APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/17 Overview – Capture fisheries 1
- APFIC:EXCO/19/INF/18 Overview – Capture fisheries 2

## Appendix 7 – Participants

### MEMBERS OF THE APFIC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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#### Vice-Chairperson

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Bhagwat Prasad  
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#### Member

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#### Outgoing Chairperson

Wilfredo Cruz  
Regional Director  
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#### Ex officio Member

Simon Nicol  
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