

Prospectus



International Workshop ***International Mechanisms for the Control and Responsible Use of Alien Species in Aquatic Ecosystems, 27-30 August 2003, Xishuangbanna, People's Republic of China***

Introduction and background

The use of alien species is a proven means to increase production and value from aquatic ecosystems. However, alien species can be a significant threat to aquatic biodiversity. As such, Members of FAO and signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) have obligated themselves to manage and control alien species that may adversely impact ecosystems. Furthermore, the movement of aquatic species has importance to international free trade, but as well as providing benefits, may concurrently incur significant risk. Members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) have duties and responsibilities to promote free-trade whilst at the same time, taking measures for protecting human and animal health. The environmental aspects of international trade are extremely controversial, and are under discussion in the ongoing “Doha development round”.

There are a range of conventions, codes of practice, agreements and guidelines that have been established to assist countries in meeting international obligations and responsibilities. Important global instruments that relate to the introduction or movement of aquatic species are:

- **Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries**, created in 1995, sets out principles and international standards of behaviour for responsible practices with a view to ensuring the effective conservation, management and development of living aquatic resources, with due respect for the ecosystem and biodiversity.
- **ICES Code of Practice on the Introductions and Transfers of Marine Organisms**, created in 1973 and updated in 1994, gives recommended procedures and practices to reduce the risks of detrimental effects from the intentional introduction and transfer of marine (including brackish water) organisms. Edorsed by FAO Regional Fishery Bodies.
- **Beijing Consensus and Implementation Strategy**, created in 2000, a detailed implementation strategy for the Technical Guidelines on Asia regional health management for responsible trans-boundary movement of live aquatic animals.
- **Cartegena protocol on Biosafety**, established in 2000 under the Convention on Biological Diversity, seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology.
- **Convention on Biological Diversity**, ratified in 1993, it's objectives are the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.
- **Convention on Wetlands**, established in 1971, also known as the Ramsar convention, provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.
- **World Trade Organization (WTO)**, established in 1995 is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations.

- **World Animal Health Organization (OIE)**, established in 1924, in association with WTO helps, *inter alia*, guarantee the sanitary safety of world trade by developing sanitary rules for international trade in animals and animal products.

The coverage of these international instruments, the signatory countries and the degree to which they are implemented varies globally. Part of the problem is related to lack of awareness at national level of responsibilities under the respective instruments, but in addition may also relate to conflicts between national aspirations and international obligations. The practical implementation of many of these instruments is also limited by institutional capacity in many countries. The relationship between these various instruments and their relevance to the movement and introduction of aquatic species needs to be clarified and brought to the attention of those responsible for their implementation. Importantly, the development of practical and meaningful strategies for their implementation is the ultimate objective.

Goal and objectives of the workshop

The goal of the workshop is to assist countries in the Greater Mekong/Lancang sub-region by increasing familiarity with, and making effective use of, international mechanisms for the control and responsible use of alien species in aquatic ecosystems. The objectives of the workshop will be to review the international mechanisms, to identify major constraints to their implementation in the sub-region, and to identify future actions needed to promote the control, movement and responsible use of alien species in the greater Mekong/Lancang Sub-Region.

Activities of the workshop

The activities of the workshop will include:

- Presentation and discussion on relevant international mechanisms concerning alien species and trans-boundary movements, and their practical applicability in the Greater Mekong/Lancang sub-region.
- Presentation and discussion on country status analyses, and case studies and review on alien species in fisheries and aquaculture, to inform debate on development of practical strategies for the sub-region.
- Development of recommendations for follow-up actions that can support countries of the the Greater Mekong/Lancang sub-region to work collaboratively, or individually, to promote responsible transboundary movement and use of alien species, in the sub-region.
- The workshop will also develop an outline that will serve as a framework for the development of Technical Guidelines on the Control and Responsible Use of Alien Species in Fisheries and Aquaculture¹.
- Background papers on the relevant international mechanisms and case studies will be prepared and distributed in advance of the workshop.

A draft agenda is attached as Annex 1.

¹ In order to help implement the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, FAO et al. have produced a Technical Guideline Series including such topics as Aquaculture, Inland Fisheries, Coastal Area Management, etc. This will be another in the series.

Audience

Planned participants (approximately 50) include policy makers and senior line officers from the fishery resource, fish health, and environment sectors from China, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Laos PDR. In addition, representatives from international development and conservation agencies, and selected resource persons from other areas having expertise in the management of alien species will be included (Annex 2).

Outputs

The primary output of the workshop will be the published report, including the background papers, case studies, outline for Technical Guidelines on alien species, and conclusions and recommended actions of the meeting. A synthesis of the various international mechanisms will be condensed into an awareness/information brochure, translated into local languages for dissemination in the region. A significant output and a key factor in implementing these mechanisms will be recommendations on practical follow up actions and a list of responsible individuals and offices in participating countries. This list and actions may serve as a basis for a future collaboration on alien species in the region.

Organization

The workshop is sponsored by the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Mekong River Commission (MRC), Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia and the Pacific (NACA), University of California Sea Grant College Program (UCSG), World Conservation Union (IUCN), Ministry of Fisheries, Peoples Republic of China and the FAO/Netherlands Partnership Programme (FNPP). The workshop will be hosted by the Yunnan Provincial Bureau of Agriculture and the Xishuangbanna Fisheries Administration and Regulation Station. Details on venue will be forthcoming.

Organizing committee: Zhang Zhiyong, (Yunnan Province), Pedro Bueno (NACA), Mike Philipps (NACA), Zhou Xiaowei (NACA), Devin Bartley (FAO), Simon Funge-Smith (FAO), Paul Olin (UCSG), Amara Yakupitiyage (AIT), Richard Friend (IUCN), Chris Barlow (MRC), Niklas Mattson (MRC).

Local organizing committee: Huang Dechang, Xishuangbanna Fisheries Administration and Regulation Station; Zhou Xiaowei (NACA).

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Provisional AGENDA



“Use of international mechanisms for the control and responsible use of alien species in aquatic ecosystems”

27-30 August, 2003,

Xishuangbanna, Yunnan Province, People’s Republic of China

DAY 1 – Wednesday, 27 August

Session 1: Introductory session to introduce participants, explain purpose and expected outputs from workshop

0900 – 1000 Opening and introduction to workshop – FAO/UC Sea Grant, Mr. Yang Zhimin, DDG of Yunnan Agricultural Department

Session 2: Presentation of international instruments, with consideration on applicability to the Greater Mekong/Lancang sub-region

1000 – 12:30 Presentation of international instruments concerning responsible use and control of alien species – 15 minutes, 5 min questions:

- FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries & ICES/EIFAC Codes of Practice – Bartley FAO;
- Convention on Biological Diversity & Cartagena Protocols – Bartley/Marttin FAO;
- Fish health guidelines for the responsible movement of aquatic species; Subasinghe/Phillips FAO/NACA
- World Trade Organization, AFTA - Patti Moore/IUCN
- OIE – Subasinghe/Phillips NACA/FAO
- Ramsar Convention – Patti Moore/IUCN
- Existing agreements for cooperation in the Greater Mekong/Lancang sub-region, and their relevance to aquatic animal movements (MRC)

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch

Session 3: Country experiences and concerns in the Greater Mekong/Lancang sub-region

14:00 – 16:00 National reports on alien species (15 min & 5 min for questions - guidelines on national reports attached as Appendix 3) – Cambodia, China, Laos PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam.

1600 – 1630 Coffee

1630 – 18:00 Plenary discussion

DAY 2 Thursday, 28 August

Session 4: Case study experiences from the Greater Mekong/Lancang sub-region and beyond

09:00 – 09.30 Reports - conclusions of the AIT/ SIDA study on the use and impacts of exotic species for aquaculture in Lower Mekong Basin - AIT

09.30 – 10.00 Plenary discussion of the findings of the AIT/SIDA study

10.00-10.30 Case study 1 (20 minutes, with 10 min for questions)

- *Litopenaeus Vannamei* introduction to Asia

10:30 – 11:00	Coffee
11:00 – 11:30	Case study 2 (20 minutes, with 10 min for questions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Papua New Guinea - the introduction of alien species to Sepik-Ramu system.
11.30 – 12.00	Case study 3 (20 minutes, with 10 min for questions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues, benefits and risks of the use of indigenous species for aquaculture in the LMB (MRC AIMS component)
12.00 – 12.30	Information sources – the FAO Database on Introductions of Aquatic Species;
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:00	Plenary discussion – Instructions and break into working groups

Session 5: Working group sessions

15.00 – 16.00	Working groups ² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three/four working groups will work to define the issues, and actions required for responsible trans-boundary movement and use of alien species in the Greater Mekong/Lancang sub-region, including joint policies, awareness raising, as relevant. • The participants will also be invited to assist FAO in providing comments and suggestions on Technical Guidelines on the Control and Responsible Use of Alien Species in Fisheries and Aquaculture. A draft framework will be provided.
1600 – 1630	Coffee
16:30 – 18:00	Working groups continued – finalize issues & actions

DAY 3 Friday, 29 August

0900 – 09.30	Feedback/progress check from working groups (5 mins per group)
09.30 – 12:30	Working Groups continue – components of awareness brochure on synthesizing major international instruments
12:30 – 1400	Lunch
1400 – 17:00	Plenary session for presentation of working groups findings and closing

Day 4 Saturday 30 August

All day - Field trip

² Working groups will be facilitated and provided with separate guidelines to assist discussion. Terms of reference for each working group will be provided during the meeting.

GUIDELINES ON PREPARATION OF NATIONAL REPORTS ON ALIEN SPECIES

Written contribution

Authors should prepare written contribution for distribution at the workshop to include:

A list of alien species and genotypes currently in use in the country. A review of the information currently available in DIAS (this list of DIAS introductions will be provided by FAO – Bartley/Martin).

Known impacts of introductions, management strategies, current plans to introduce new alien species.

Transboundary issues concerning aquatic animal pathogens

Impacts of transboundary pathogen issues, management strategies,

Brief review of national legislation governing the use of alien species including health.

Identification of the national agency(ies) responsible for managing the use of alien species and the name of the contact person in this agency.

Future plans and recommendations at national level, and also for regional cooperation.

Oral contribution

The oral contribution of 15 minutes should summarize briefly the above points, focusing on problems, opportunities and future plans in regards to implementing international obligations, guidelines and codes of practice.