

Reporting on FIRMS Activities
FIRMS Steering Committee Meeting - Fourth Session,
Rome, Italy, 26 February – 2 March 2007
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Introduction

SEAFDEC has entered into collaboration with the Fishery Resources Monitoring System (FIRMS) in December 2004 with endorsement of the SEAFDEC Council during its 36th Meeting. The partnership is envisaged to assist the Member Countries in achieving the objectives of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF), including the implementation of International Plans of Action and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Strategy for Improving Information on Status and Trends of Capture Fisheries.

Following the collaborative arrangements, SEAFDEC has started the trial phase of developing a test inventory of shark fisheries in Southeast Asian countries based on data/information from a SEAFDEC program to FIRMS Database and Module Development. In addition, SEAFDEC participated in the Third Session of FIRMS Steering Committee Meeting held in February 2005 to review the FIRMS Information Management Policy, development of FIRMS Database and Module, FIRMS web-site, Strategy for FIRMS partnership in promoting the development of a global network for reporting on fisheries and stocks status and trends, etc. Collaboration with FIRMS is envisaged to provide assistance to the Member Countries on the use of fisheries information in a user-friendly manner for their planning and management of fisheries.

Summary of Activities in 2005 and 2006

1. Developments on inventories of Marine resources, and of fisheries

During 2005 and 2006, SEAFDEC continued collaboration with FIRMS focused on provision of information concluded from SEAFDEC program on Management of Fisheries and Utilization of Shark in Southeast Asia to FIRMS fisheries inventory, which is currently under development stage.

To strengthen capacity of SEAFDEC staff to gain better understanding on overall FIRMS system and inventory modules, which includes marine resources, fisheries and fishery management, as well as basic usage of XML program, a one-week training session (28 November – 2 December 2005) at FIRMS Secretariat was organized with participation of two SEAFDEC staff.

In addition, SEAFDEC staff also participated the First FIRMS Technical Working Group Meeting which was also organized from 5-8 December 2005, in order to gather views from all FIRMS partners, including, as basis for further development of the system and summarize the issues to be further discussed during the following FIRMS Steering Committee Meeting to be organized in February 2006.

The progress on Sharks Inventories for FIRMS

- From mid 2005, SEAFDEC has started providing information for Fisheries Inventory.

- Following up the training session and the 1st TWG Meeting, SEAFDEC has provided all information available on Sharks Inventories (Fisheries) in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam to Elena in Excel Template (as the XML template for fisheries inventory is still not available). However, as the XML inventory and the on-line editing system is not available, some information such as table or figure still cannot be uploaded and the attached MS word documents with all the information was sent to FIRMS.
2. Reporting on status, trends of Marine resources, and of fisheries
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 3. Development/review of standards
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 4. Development of Applications (e.g. new module at Secretariat level, or enhancements in streamlining workflow at Partner level)
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 5. Development of case studies/prototypes
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 6. Training or skills development
Two SEAFDEC staff participated a one-week training session (28 November – 2 December 2005) on the overall FIRMS system and inventory modules, which includes marine resources, fisheries and fishery management, as well as basic usage of XML program.
 7. Promotional activities
To improve visibility of FIRMS, SEAFDEC has established a direct link to the home page of FIRMS from the integrated homepage.
 8. Planned activities during the coming intercessional period

Inventories on Sharks - Areas for future collaboration are:

- a. Sharks inventory need to be put in XML file (when the XML template for fisheries is settled and available); and additional items, like photo and table, are to be put in online editing program.
- b. Identification of other information to be provided to FIRMS e.g. pelagic fisheries, socio-economic data, etc. However there is a need to carefully investigate to ensure the relevancy of information and usefulness of the effort, scope and nature of available information.
- c. Inventories in Southeast Asia - SEAFDEC will continue collaboration in coordination with FIRMS as well as involvement at the regional level on the review and validation of the work when the outputs are advanced enough through Strategy STF workshops.
- d. Review and contribute to FIRMS Database and Module Development, and Draft FIRMS Website - SEAFDEC will continue providing comment and suggestion on the development.