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Reduction of Environmental Impact from Tropical Shrimp Trawling, through the introduction of By-catch
Reduction Technologies and Change of Management
(EP/GLO/201/GEF)

National Coordinators Global Review Meeting 10 to 16 July 2005

INFORMATION NOTE

Background

One source of stress on the marine environment which is of growing international concern is the impact from capture fisheries, hence the need to develop, promote and implement environmentally-sound technologies and practices in the marine fisheries sector, so as to prevent loss of biodiversity and habitat degradation.

Shrimp-trawling in tropical shallow-water regions is very common. The cod-ends of the trawls used need relatively small meshes in order to retain the all-important shrimp catch (even though many vessels are in fact targeting both shrimp and fish of commercial-size at the same time). These shallow waters are in many cases, the spawning grounds for adult fishes of high commercial value, as well as the nursery grounds for their juveniles. One impact of shrimp-trawling on the environment therefore, is that large amounts of juvenile fish are caught together with the targeted shrimps, and this can seriously affect other fisheries which target the adult fish of these species. A second impact is that presently many of these juvenile fish, as well as other low-valued by-catch comprising large quantities of dead organisms, are often discarded (dead) at sea. A third impact is that Shrimp-trawling also has a physical impact on the bottom habitat, and in some areas this impact might have a detrimental effect on benthic biodiversity.

The growing international concern on such practices expressed by public and environmental groups is reflected in a number of international resolutions—the UN General Assembly Resolutions 49/116 and 49/118 of December 1994, Resolution 50/25 of December 1995; the Rome Consensus on World Fisheries 1995; the Kyoto Declaration and Plan of Action from the International Conference on the Sustainable Contribution of Fisheries to Food Security.

In November 1998 during its Fifty-third Session, the General Assembly of the United Nations urged “States, international organisations and regional and sub-regional fisheries management organisations and arrangements to take action, including, through assistance to developing countries, to reduce by-catches, fish discards, and post-harvest losses consistent with international law and relevant international instruments, including the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries “

Also the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation, endorsed by the UN General Assembly, called for maintaining the productivity of marine and coastal areas and set out actions to achieve sustainable fisheries and promote ocean conservation and management, including facilitating the elimination of destructive fishing practices.

The reduction of by-catches and discards of unwanted catch is thus now a policy for many States, as well as for an increasing number of regional and sub-regional fisheries management

organisations and arrangements. The reduction of discards, and the environmental impact of this, is also a priority activity under FAO's Regular Programme, and is addressed specifically in the rolling Medium-Term Plan entitled "Reduction of discards and environmental impact from fisheries" which includes the evaluation of by-catches and discards resulting from various fisheries, plus assessment of the impact of trawling and other similar fishing methods on the sea-bottom, and on the environment in general.

FAO will publish very soon a new estimate on global discards. In general, it is stated there has been a substantial reduction in discards since the first assessment was made in 1994. There are two major reasons for this reduction:

- Use of more selective fishing gears, the introduction of by-catch and discard regulations and improved enforcement of regulatory measures; and
- Increased retention of by-catch for human or animal food, as a result of improved technologies and expanding market opportunities.

But it is also indicated that tropical shrimp trawl fisheries have the highest discard rate and alone account for more than 27 % of total estimated discards. The aggregate or weighted discard rate for all shrimp trawl fisheries is 62.3 %. These fisheries have consistently high discard rates deriving from a range of factors:

- Shrimp is usually less than 20 % of the demersal biomass in many shrimp fishing grounds;
- The relatively small mesh size required to capture shrimp inevitably results in large quantities of by-catch;
- Vessels are designed for shrimp retention and have limited freezing and hold capacity;
- Transshipment at sea is often discouraged by vessel owners, or prohibited by authorities;
- The shrimp grounds are often at a considerable distance from the markets for by-catch, thereby rendering its retention uneconomical;
- By-catch species are often of small size and low value which also makes by-catch retention uneconomical; and
- Enforcement of regulations on minimum landings of by-catch and on discard reduction may be deficient.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has provided funds to a joint FAO/UNEP project on "*Reduction of environmental impact from tropical shrimp trawling, through the introduction of by-catch reduction technologies and change of management.*" The project commenced in July 2002.

Twelve countries and one Intergovernmental Organisation are participating in the project. Asia is represented by Indonesia and the Philippines, Western Africa by Nigeria and the Cameroon, the Gulf Region by Iran and Bahrain, and Latin America and the Caribbean by Colombia, Cuba, Costa Rica, Mexico, Trinidad & Tobago, and Venezuela. Following the Inaugural meeting held in Mexico in September 2002, the participating countries developed work plans, and the project activities started. In order to avoid duplication of activities, and to enhance the cooperation between the participating countries, a series of workshops have been conducted on national and regional level within the project's overall work plan.

Recognising the different stage of the project implementation in the participating countries, and following the suggestions of the International Project Steering Committee there is a need for a mid term meeting of all national Coordinators in order to evaluate achievements and to exchange experiences and views about the project work in the future.

Objectives of the Workshop

The objectives of the Workshop are to:

1. Exchange knowledge on results achieved in the project
2. Develop joint work programmes
3. Provide information on administrative procedures
4. Evaluate the work done
5. Develop work programmes for the remaining project time

Preliminary Agenda

The tentative agenda is attached.

Participants

National Project Coordinators from all participating countries and SEAFDEC, together with representative from UNEP, and representatives from fishing industry, will be invited to attend.

Workshop Dates and Venue

The Workshop will be hosted by Instituto Nacional de la Pesca (INP), Mexico, from 10 to 16 July 2005 at:

The Gran Costa Real Resort
Manzanillo, Colima State
Mexico

www.realresorts.com.mx/Gran_Costa_Real_Manzanillo/About_Us/

Working Language

The Meeting will be conducted in English.

Meeting Presentations

It is expected that each project country should present a prepared statement on the current status of the preparation of National Work Programmes, including information on resource capacities (personnel, information, financial). It is also expected that a selected number of representatives from the private sector, shall make a short presentation on the current situation on shrimp trawling in their countries.

If possible, kindly e-mail your presentations in advance to Mr. W. Thiele (see last item for e-mail address).

Documentation

These will be provided during registration.

Registration

Registration for the meeting will be held from 8:00 a.m. on Monday 11 July at the Meeting Room, Gran Costa Real Resort.

Secretariat

Secretariat staff will be identified by name badges. Telephone, typing and photocopying facilities are available in the Secretariat during meeting hours. Travel arrangements may be done through the Secretariat.

Accommodation

Participants will be accommodated at the Gran Costa Real Resort. A room rate of US\$ 108.50 for a standard room (single occupancy, all inclusive) has been arranged for participants.

Travel and Visa Arrangements

Country representatives will receive a return air ticket (economy class) by the most direct route, from the international airport closest to their place of residence to Manzanillo, Mexico.

Air tickets provided by FAO must be used only as authorized and in no circumstances will the organizers pay for additional costs for re-routing made directly by participants or governments, or for tickets purchased by them directly, except upon express authorization by the organizers, which must be granted previously.

Participants travelling from countries where there are no Embassies or Consulates serving Mexico, should provide their full passport details to the Contact Persons as soon as possible to facilitate visa arrangements.

Passport details should include:

- Full Name of Participant
- Country of Birth
- Nationality
- Passport Number
- Date of Issue
- Place of Issue
- Date of Expiry

Allowances

The country representatives will receive a daily subsistence allowance (DSA), to cover accommodation and meals, and airport transfers. You will receive the allowances during registration.

Airport Transfers

More information will be provided at a later stage.

Contact Persons

Please confirm your participation no later than Friday 24 June to:

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| <p>Mr. Wilfried Thiele Project Coordinator Fishery Technology Service Fisheries Department Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Rome Italy Tel. No. (39-06) 570 55836 Fax No. (39-06) 570 55188 Email: wilfried.thiele@fao.org</p> | <p>Mr. Adrian Garcia Programme Assistant Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Farallón No. 130, Col. Jardines del Pedregal México D.F. Tel. No. (52-55) 5652-4903 Fax No. (52-55) 5568-4595 Email: agarcia@fao.org.mx</p> | <p>Mr. Gabriel Aldana Flores Director, INP Regional Research Center, Manzanillo, Mexico Tel. No. (52 314) 332 3750 (52 314) 332 3751 Email: gabrielald2002@yahoo.com</p> |
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National Coordinators Global Review Meeting

Date: 10 -16 July 2005

- 10 July Arrival of participants
 Welcome reception
- 11 July 9.00 Opening by the Governmental representative
 9.30 Welcome by FAO (FAO Representative)
 9.45 Welcome by UNEP representative
 10.00 Break
 10.30 Introduction by International Project coordinator
 - Purpose of the Nat. Coordinators meeting
 - Overall status of the project
 - Work to be done in the remaining project time
 - Legal issues
 11.30 Country reports, Mexico
 The country reports should include;
 - statement about the actual situation and research
 activities;
 - technical achievements; devices tested etc.
 - recommended by-catch reduction technologies for
 different fleet sectors in the country;
 - concepts for increased utilisation of by-catch;
 - problems in the project implementation;
 - alternative fishing methods for certain sectors
- 13.00 Lunch
- 14.00 Country report Cuba
 15.00 Country report Costa Rica
 16.00 Country report Colombia
 17.00 End of sessions
- 12 July 8.30 Country reports cont.
 Trinidad & Tobago
 9.30 Venezuela
 10.30 Break
 11.00 Discussions on regional problems (Latin America and
 Carribbean)

- 13.00 Lunch
 - 14.30 Country reports
Nigeria
 - 15.30 Cameroon
 - 16.30 Discussions on regional problems (Africa)
 - 18.00 End of sessions
- 13 July
- 8.30 Country reports
I.R.Iran
 - 9.30 Bahrain
 - 10.30 Break
 - 11.00 Discussion on regional problems
- 13.00 Lunch
- 14.30 Country report SEAFDEC
(Report should include results achieved under SEAFDEC project)
 - 15.30 Country report
Indonesia
 - 16.30 County report
Philippines
- 14 July
- 8.30 Discussion on regional problems
Asia
 - 10.30 Break
 - 11.00 Reports and discussions on administrative and financial issues
- 13.00 Lunch
- 14.30 cont.
 - 16.00 Any other matters
- 15 July
- Field trip