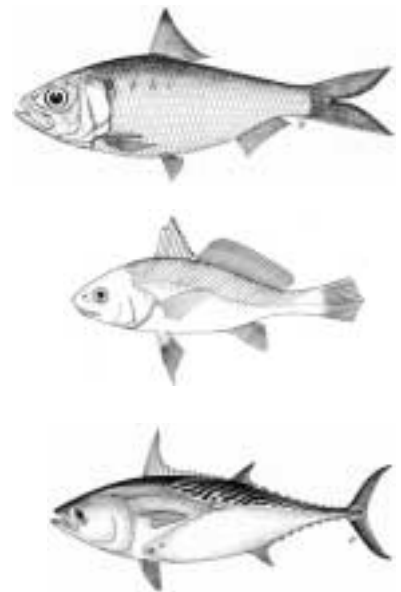


# **ASIA-PACIFIC FISHERY COMMISSION**

## **Report of the Twenty-ninth Session**



**Report of the Twenty-ninth Session of the**

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

**Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 21-23 August 2006**

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## Foreword

The Twenty-ninth Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) heralded a new direction for APFIC. After a lengthy review, the Commission agreed that APFIC could best serve its members by becoming a regional consultative forum that would provide a neutral platform to examine issues and develop solutions affecting the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture across Member Nations. It also agreed that the Session should be preceded by a major Regional Consultative Forum Meeting based on inter-sessional workshops on selected issues.

This Session was the first to consider the outcomes of that process and the outputs from the first Regional Consultative Forum Meeting held in Kuala Lumpur, 16-19 August 2006. The overall theme for the Consultative Forum Meeting was “Reforming fisheries in aquaculture in Asia-Pacific”. Input into this forum meeting were the recommendations of two APFIC Regional Workshops – one on “Low value and trash fish in the Asia-Pacific region” held in Hanoi, Viet Nam, 7-9 June 2005 and another on “Mainstreaming fisheries co-management” held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, 9-12 August 2005.

In the APFIC Session, the recommendations from the Regional Consultative Forum were presented to Commissioners for their consideration. Through this process more action-orientated decisions were adopted, which can be undertaken by Members in collaboration with partners. The Session also revealed human capacity gaps which can be addressed with assistance from regional partners and donors.

The Session also identified two new topics as a focus for the work of the Commission during the 2006/08 biennium: (i) managing fishing capacity and (ii) fish trade and standards. Both of these topics include a range of issues relating to the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture in the region, including illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) and certification of fish products for trade.



He Changchui  
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## PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

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### *ABSTRACT*

This is the final report of the Twenty-ninth Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 21 to 23 August 2006. Major topics discussed were: the status and potential of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific; report of the executive committee; selected issues of regional importance – low value/trash fish and co-management, governance and institutions; policy challenges and emerging issues; report of the Regional Consultative Forum Meeting; and work plan of major issues for APFIC in the subsequent biennium (2006-2008).

### **Distribution:**

Participants in the Session  
Members of the Commission  
Other interested Nations and International Organizations  
FAO Fisheries Department  
Fishery Officers in FAO Regional Offices

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## OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) held its twenty-ninth session from 21 to 23 August 2006, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The Session was attended by 43 participants comprising the representatives of 14 member countries of the Commission, and by observers from nine intergovernmental, international and regional organizations. A list of the delegates and observers is attached as Appendix B.

2. At the official opening of the Session the Chairperson of APFIC, Y. Bhg, Dato' Junaidi bin Che Ayub, Director-General, Department of Fisheries (DOF), Malaysia, welcomed the members of the Commission and other participants. The Chairperson noted that since the Twenty-eighth Session of APFIC in Thailand, a significant number of activities have been accomplished. He noted that with the changing role of APFIC and the need to ensure the sustainability of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in Asia and the Pacific region, it was necessary for APFIC to develop ways and means to ensure that action plans can be implemented. This will be a challenging task for the Twenty-ninth Session of APFIC.

3. He also noted that the Session would have to consider the outcomes of the Regional Consultative Forum Meeting (RCFM) *Reforming fisheries and aquaculture in the Asia-Pacific*, which was held from 16 to 19 August 2006. This was the first APFIC regional consultative forum and it had provided a considerable number of conclusions and recommendations, which the Commission should discuss and endorse. These included strategies and policies for fisheries development and management, and action plans to address the issues raised. His welcome remarks are attached as Appendix D.

4. The welcome address was delivered by Mr Ndiaga Gueye on behalf of Mr Ichiro Nomura, Assistant Director-General, Fisheries Department of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Mr Gueye expressed his gratitude to the Government of Malaysia for hosting the Twenty-ninth Session of APFIC. He noted that this was a very special session, as it represented a new direction for APFIC as a regional consultative forum. He noted that the role and function of APFIC has been under review since its Twenty-fifth Session held in Seoul, Republic of Korea in 1996. These review processes have included developing a series of options for the future of APFIC and at its Twenty-eighth Session it was agreed that APFIC could best serve its members by becoming a regional consultative forum. This session is the first to consider the outcomes of that process and the outputs from the first RCFM that was held in Kuala Lumpur from 16 to 19 August 2006. The recommendations from the RCFM will be presented to commissioners for their consideration. In conclusion, he expressed hope that this new process will lead to decisions for affirmative action that can be undertaken by each member. It would also reveal human capacity gaps that could be addressed through help from other regional partners and donors.

5. Mr Gueye thanked the Department of Fisheries, Malaysia for their excellent hospitality and asked them to convey to the Government of Malaysia, FAO's gratitude for the excellent arrangements and for hosting of the Twenty-ninth Session of APFIC. His welcome address is attached as Appendix E.

6. Mr Tuan Haji Mokhtar bin Ismail, Under-Secretary, on behalf of the Honourable Tan Sri Dato' Sri' Abi' Musa Asa' Ari bin Mohamed Nor, Secretary-General, Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry, Malaysia delivered the opening address. He stated that he was deeply honoured to host the Twenty-ninth Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission. He congratulated the APFIC for its long history, which has seen it evolve from an advisory council (the Indo-Pacific Fishery Council – IPFC) into an action-orientated commission (Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission). He also commended APFIC for the excellent work over its fifty-seven years existence. He concluded by wishing the Twenty-ninth Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission well and looked forward to the finalizing of an agreed two-year workplan for the sustainability of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in Asia and the Pacific region. His statement is attached as Appendix G.

## **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

7. The Commission adopted the agenda shown in Appendix A and agreed on the arrangements for the session. The documents considered and reviewed by the Commission are listed in Appendix C.

## **INTER-SESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF APFIC**

8. The Secretariat introduced document APFIC/06/2, summarizing the main events and activities undertaken since the twenty-eighth session. He drew the Commission's attention to the changing role of APFIC and its function as a regional consultative forum. In this respect, he noted the participation of representatives of international and regional organizations of relevance to fisheries, who as observers act as partners in the Commission's activities.

9. The Secretary urged member country delegations to look towards possible regional recommendations that could form the basis of collaborative work by the Commission's members.

### **Publications and web-based information dissemination for awareness raising and capacity building**

10. The Secretariat has developed the APFIC website <http://www.apfic.org> (the official launching was held during the Seventieth Session of the APFIC Executive Committee). The website has proved to be an excellent medium for providing information, especially after the 26 December 2004 tsunami, and providing a linkage to other regional fishery bodies, organizations and arrangements. The website is also a portal for all forms of relevant fishery information, targeting the likely needs of fisheries professionals in the APFIC region.

11. The Secretariat has produced 19 publications (APFIC/06/2 Addendum 1). These include:

- reports of APFIC meetings (APFIC executive committee sixty-ninth session; APFIC twenty-eighth session; APFIC executive council seventieth session);
- reports on two strategic regional tsunami rehabilitation workshops (in collaboration with the Consortium to Restore Shattered Communities in Tsunami-affected Nations (CONSRN) partners (see below);
- *Regional strategic framework for tsunami rehabilitation* (in collaboration of CONSRN partners);
- reports on the two APFIC regional consultative workshops on low value/trash fish and mainstreaming fisheries co-management;
- technical reviews on low value/trash fish and mainstreaming fisheries co-management as input into the regional consultative workshops; and
- publications on the introduction and expansion of white shrimp into Asia, small-scale fisheries research, stock enhancement practices in inland waters, tsunami rehabilitation, and the history of industrial marine fisheries in Southeast Asia.

### **Direct assistance and advice to member countries**

12. APFIC has also provided direct advice to members. A full listing can be found in document APFIC/06/2 Addendum 2. This includes:

- technical inputs and secretariat support to FAO technical consultations (2) and regional/international workshops (8);



- technical inputs into other UN agencies' regional workshops (2);
- technical assistance to national workshops (2);
- backstopping for FAO (both regional and country) projects (18); and planning and project development meetings (3)

### **Regional meetings and workshops**

13. The Secretariat has organized four successful major regional consultative workshops, notable for the excellent partnerships with a range of regional fishery organizations, institutions and projects, including:

- Rehabilitation of fisheries and aquaculture in coastal communities of tsunami affected countries in Asia, Bangkok, Thailand, 28 February – 1 March 2005;
- Low value and trash fish in Asia and the Pacific region, Hanoi, Viet Nam, 7-9 June 2005;
- Mainstreaming fisheries co-management, Siem Reap, Cambodia, 9-12 August 2005; and
- One year later – rehabilitation of fisheries and aquaculture in coastal communities of tsunami affected countries in Asia, Bangkok, Thailand, 1-3 March 2006.

14. The APFIC Secretariat organized the programme and participants and with assistance from the Intergovernmental Organization for Marketing Information and Technical Advisory Services for Fishery Products in the Asia and Pacific Region (INFOFISH) and the Department of Fisheries, Malaysia held the regional consultative forum meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 16 to 19 August 2006. This also included commissioning background reviews on: (i) the history of industrial fishing in Southeast Asia and the Pacific; (ii) the policy drivers and directions in APFIC member countries; and (iii) illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU) in the APFIC region. The themes of the RCFM were:

- Theme 1: Future of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific region and the low value/trash fish problem
- Theme 2: Co-management, governance and institutions
- Theme 3: Policy challenges
- Theme 4: Emerging issues
  - Illegal, unreported and unregulated fisheries (IUU)
  - Standards and trade.

### **Collaboration with other international/regional bodies**

15. The APFIC Secretariat has actively pursued collaboration with a number of regional and international organizations (full list of activities is given in APFIC/06/2 Addendum 3), including:

- Bay of Bengal Programme – Intergovernmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO)
- INFOFISH
- International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF)
- Mekong River Commission (MRC)
- Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA)
- Partnership for Environmental Management in the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA)
- Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)

- Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC)
- The WorldFish Center (WorldFish)
- World Conservation Union (IUCN).

### **Other activities related to the Commission's activities**

16. The APFIC Secretary, Dr Derek Staples, participated in the FAO Regional Fisheries Body (RFB) meeting in Rome from 14 to 15 March 2005. Its agenda included: (i) review of decisions from the Twenty-sixth Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) relevant to regional fisheries bodies (RFBs); (ii) information on the role of RFBs; (iii) external factors affecting fisheries management; (iv) approaches to incorporating ecosystems considerations into fisheries management by RFBs; (v) harmonization of catch documentation; (vi) relations between regional fisheries bodies and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); and (vii) the status of the Fisheries Global Information System/Fisheries Resource Monitoring System (FIGIS/FIRMS).

17. The APFIC Secretariat has also been actively supporting the development of the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem project, approved by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in 2005. The project has been endorsed by seven of the eight Bay of Bengal countries (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Maldives, Sri Lanka and Thailand), and is currently seeking co-financing.

18. Following the devastating tsunami on 26 December 2004, the APFIC Secretariat has been very active in coordinating regional activities, as well as providing direct in-country support. Immediately after the event, the APFIC Secretariat joined hands with five other regional fisheries/aquaculture bodies: the Bay of Bengal Programme – Intergovernmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO), the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia Pacific (NACA), the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre (SEAFDEC) and the WorldFish Center (WorldFish) to form the Consortium to Restore Shattered Communities in Tsunami-affected Nations (CONSRN). The consortium was particularly effective in pooling intelligence on the impact on the tsunami from its different networks, as well as facilitating the coordination of tsunami responses. The APFIC Secretariat has been directly involved in FAO emergency relief projects, especially in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand. As part of the UN Flash appeal, FAO has been responsible for a portfolio of 75 projects, valued at US\$ 61.22 million. As these projects wind down, the APFIC Secretariat, through a Swedish International Development Agency (Sida)-funded Coordination and Technical Support Unit project, has been assisting in the development of longer-term rehabilitation programmes and projects for the tsunami-affected members.

### **Other activities of the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific of relevance to APFIC**

19. Projects addressing national level fisheries and aquaculture development issues are ongoing in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Pakistan, and Viet Nam. Regional technical cooperation projects to assist in the implementation of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries through regional initiatives, especially environmental and social sustainability, improved trade and information, are being addressed by the following regional projects: Poverty Alleviation through Improved Aquatic Resources Management in Asia; Elaboration of a National Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing; Addressing the Quality of Information on Inland Fisheries (AQUIIF); Strengthening National Capabilities in Seafood Trade Policy, including Risk Assessment and Traceability; and the Tonle Sap Environmental Management Project Component 2: Organizing Communities for Natural Resource Management of the Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve (TSBR). FAO Headquarters in Rome is leading many of these projects, although the APFIC Secretariat is often requested to carry out backstopping missions. FAO has also been assisting member countries in the areas of legislative and policy reform in fisheries through regional and national projects in Cambodia, Pacific Island countries and Pakistan.

20. Two major projects being lead from the FAO Regional Office in Bangkok are due to be completed in 2006. The first is the Sida-funded project Strengthening the Capacity for Gathering Information for Fisheries Management (GCP/RAS/199/SWE) in Cambodia, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Viet Nam, to be completed later this year. Through the collection and dissemination of information relating to the socio-economics of coastal communities, fishery-related issues of those communities and conflicts between different users of the fishery resources, the project is assisting governments in raising awareness of their policies, and in the case of Viet Nam and Thailand, considering actions necessary to reduce fishing capacity. The second project is the FAO-implemented United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project on Empowerment of Coastal Fishing Communities for Livelihood Security (BGD/97/017) in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, which is currently considering an effective exit strategy that focuses on providing an ongoing consultative environment through the development of an active policy framework that supports the coastal fishers and their organizations.

### **Report of the executive committee**

21. The Secretary reported on the activities of the executive committee and the report of the seventieth session of the executive committee, which was convened in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 23 to 25 August 2005 (document APFIC/06/Inf.4). The Commission endorsed the report of the executive committee.

### **Responses by the Commission**

22. In their responses to the Secretary's report, the commissioners thanked the host country for its excellent arrangements, both during the regional consultative forum meeting (RCFM) and the twenty-ninth session.

23. The Commission noted the wide range of activities and achievements of the Secretariat and commended the Secretariat on its efforts over the past two years and in particular for organizing the RCFM. The Commission thanked APFIC for convening the RCFM and for the excellent coverage of the status of fisheries and aquaculture in the region and of the issues that needed to be addressed.

24. Drawing attention to the conclusions and recommendations of the RCFM, several members noted that these would form the basis of substantive discussions and actions at national level in the future. The Commission noted that APFIC was successfully fulfilling its role in working closely with other international and regional organizations and had made the changes required to transform itself into a regional consultative forum.

25. Several members suggested that APFIC could move forward to work more closely with other regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) in the region to facilitate the exchange of information between these organizations and APFIC members.

26. The countries affected by the tsunami thanked APFIC and FAO and the other collaborating organizations that worked with APFIC for their prompt response to the tsunami crisis of December 2004.

27. Several members thanked APFIC for its implementation of the Regional Information for Management project supported by Sida. It was stated that this sort of project was of great value, particularly in terms of its role in the management and understanding of small-scale fisheries issues. The final workshop of this project will be convened in October 2006 in Viet Nam. Several other members thanked FAO and APFIC for their support to national project initiatives in inland and coastal fisheries. There were a number of specific requests for assistance that were considered under agenda items eight and nine.

28. The Secretary thanked the members for their appreciation of APFIC's activities and confirmed that both APFIC and FAO would look for ways to address the various specific requests of the members.

## **OVERVIEW – STATUS AND POTENTIAL OF FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

29. The Commission considered this agenda item based on document APFIC/06/3, which is a summary of the draft Status and Potential of Fisheries and Aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific (2006) APFIC/06/Inf.9. The final document is being prepared and will be finalized soon.

30. The Commission recognized that the fisheries and aquaculture sector is of fundamental importance to Asia and the Pacific region. The sector benefits significantly from trade with major global import markets in Europe, Japan, and USA. Fisheries and aquaculture also have significant direct effects on the income, nutritional status and the livelihoods of millions of people in the region.

### **Production trends**

31. Production from capture fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific region has grown since 2002 (3 percent for capture fisheries and 12.5 percent for aquaculture). In 2004, the region contributed 49 percent of the global production of captured fish (46.7 million tonnes) and 91 percent of global aquaculture (54.3 million tonnes). This huge production, both in terms of tonnage and value, provides many opportunities for revenue generation, employment, poverty reduction and increased food security.

32. There is little information on the sector's contribution to employment in the region. However, some data are available for some countries as a result of census information. Overall, the sector is a very significant employer, with Asia representing 87 percent of the world's total employment of fishers and fish farmers. There are about 33 million people engaged in fishing (and the figure is not changing significantly) and about 9.5 million fish farmers (this figure is increasing). Many of these activities are pursued on a part-time basis as a component of a complex livelihood.

33. The world's production from capture fisheries is now about 95 million tonnes with 46.7 million tonnes from Asia and the Pacific region. Six APFIC countries were among the top 10 producers in 2004 with China the largest producer with a reported catch of 17.5 million tonnes from capture fisheries.

34. In marine waters the major trend is that production from the APFIC region (without China) peaked in the late 1980s followed by a slow decline, and then, recently, a slight increase. However, these total production figures mask what has really been happening. Production of pelagic species peaked in the late 1980s and then declined and levelled off. Significantly, demersal species peaked as early as the mid-1970s, declined and then levelled off and never returned to the mid-1970s level. Small pelagic species like Japanese anchovy and larger pelagic species such as skipjack tuna dominate the fisheries of the region.

35. The APFIC region's contribution to inland waters production (including China) is greater than that to marine waters production at about 65 percent of the global total. Production from inland waters underwent a rapid increase in the 1990s, but there is evidence of levelling off in recent years in both China and the rest of the APFIC region. The apparent increase in the 1990s was largely the result of a revision in reporting from Cambodian inland waters that saw a significant increase in the reported production.

36. Unlike capture fisheries, aquaculture production is continuing to grow. There is a steady increase in the APFIC region's production and a dramatic increase in reported production from China. Eight APFIC member countries (including USA) are among the top 10 producing countries. Global aquaculture

production, excluding aquatic plants, is now 45.5 million tonnes. Asia and the Pacific region produces approximately 90 percent of this, with about 70 percent coming from China. The top five produced animal species in aquaculture in terms of tonnage remain carps, with tilapia sixth and the white leg shrimp (*Litopenaeus vannamei*) seventh.

### **State of fishery and aquaculture resources**

37. Only a few counties in the region carry out regular stock assessments and use these in management. The reason for this is fairly obvious: given the hundreds of species, diversity of gears and fisheries, this is an enormous task and most countries simply do not have the capacity to do it. Some estimate maximum sustainable yield (MSY) based on aggregate data, in particular catch and effort data, but caution is needed in using these estimates to guide fisheries policy and management. The estimates are based on a number of assumptions, many of which are known to be unrealistic. Scientific survey data is still the best indicator of status and these all show dramatic declines in available fish biomasses in coastal demersal fisheries, with current biomass as low as 6 to 30 percent of the biomass recorded 20 to 30 years ago.

38. An example from the Gulf of Thailand shows that with a reduction in fishing effort, catches increased and, more importantly, profits also increased. At MSY, catch is greater and profit greater. At the maximum economic yield (MEY) catch is slightly less but the profit is even greater because the overall cost of fishing is reduced. This type of data demonstrates that fisheries management is a good investment and should encourage policy decisions to be made to reduce fishing capacity.

39. There is little systematic data on production and landings of low value/trash fish, but studies conducted by APFIC in five countries and an Advisory Council for Industrial Research (ACIAR) study in Viet Nam indicate that across these six countries the volume is approximately 7 434 million tonnes taken annually. A weighted average across these countries suggests that low value/trash fish account for 25 percent of total catch.

40. There are 65 large marine ecosystems (LMEs) worldwide, of which 20 are in the APFIC region. These can be characterized into 4 types.

- ***Pelagic systems e.g. Kuroshio Current*** Dominated by South American pilchard in the past. These declined in the late 1980s. After their decline, the trophic level of the catch increased as a result of a higher proportion of chub mackerel and Japanese anchovy being taken.
- ***Those fished down the food chain, e.g. Yellow Sea.*** Changes in catches of different species over time occurred resulting in a relatively steady decline in mean trophic level, indicative of fishing down the food chain.
- ***Those still increasing, e.g. Bay of Bengal.*** Reported catch is still increasing for most species – driven largely by Indonesia’s catch. The decline in trophic level is also apparent.
- ***Those strictly managed, e.g. SE Australia.*** Pattern reflects the management regime. Southern bluefin tuna declined in the 1960s and are now under strict quotas and very little is caught in this LME. Catch now dominated by small shark, Australian salmon and blue grenadier (*hoki*). The rock lobster stock is very well managed and has a stable supply.

41. The current interest in tuna in this region is high. However, all species, except skipjack tuna, are fully exploited or already overexploited. For APFIC member countries, this means that they will have to compete with other fishing nations to be successful, although there is a danger that further increases in fishing capacity will jeopardize good management. This will also require membership of the increasing number of fishery management organizations and arrangements that are being established to deal with tuna stocks.

42. Asian aquaculture is characterized by a flexible group of species that can be grown in a range of systems (extensive through to intensive systems) and sold in different markets. The production of marine finfish and freshwater carnivores is increasing rapidly because of their export potential and good domestic markets (this is in response to the decline of luxury wild fish and increasingly affluent urban markets). There is increased production of marine and brackish water species, accompanied by much improved reporting detail (particularly from the People's Republic of China), allowing better analysis of trends. With regard to freshwater carnivorous fish production, *basa* catfish production is expanding in Viet Nam (targeting export markets). Eel production is relatively stable, but requires elvers, which are a potential future constraint, particularly when sourced from Europe. Production of other freshwater carnivores is also increasing and these are largely targeted at niche regional markets. Feeds remain a significant constraint for all carnivorous finfish production and the development of formulated feeds is a major need.

43. Production of omnivorous fish is also increasing, with carps still predominant, but tilapia continues to make gains. This is also part of the industrialization and standardization of aquaculture commodities where there are export opportunities.

44. Crustacean production is dominated by shrimp and current trends see greatly increasing production of white leg shrimp (*Litopenaeus vannamei*) largely as a result of access to Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) stocks. There has been a large-scale changeover from *Penaeus monodon* to *L. vannamei* in some countries, but there have also been problems with declining prices and increasing trade measures (anti-dumping, residues etc.). Health problems are now emerging because of poor control of SPF systems and poorly controlled movement of broodstock. There is an urgent need for improved regulation as well as the development of *P. monodon* SPF (this is in progress but not yet commercial). Other crustacean production includes freshwater prawn, crab and lobster fattening, all of which are increasing. There are problems with seed supply and the use of fresh feeds.

45. Mollusc production in the region continues to expand, however there are increasing site limitations and adverse effects from the deterioration of coastal water quality in some areas. Molluscs are difficult to trade internationally, principally because of the problems with meeting the sanitary and phytosanitary requirements, and much of the trade remains at national level.

46. The production of aquatic plants, particularly food algae, is increasing in the People's Republic of China. The global demand for biopolymers is also driving development in new areas. The potential of algae for other non-food products offers a wide potential range of systems and products and it can be expected that this part of the sector will increase considerably.

## **Outlook for fisheries and aquaculture**

47. The Global Outlook published by WorldFish and the International Food Policy Research Institute shows an increased demand for fish from developing countries, a shift in the production of capture fisheries away from developed countries, and a rising share of aquaculture. There will also be a turn around in fish trade with more countries in the region importing fish and this will be accompanied by rises in the price of fish.

48. Future scenarios developed by APFIC/FAO and WorldFish conclude that the increases in the price of fish meal and the declines in capture production will lead to improved utilization and improved feeds and feeding efficiencies.

49. Two emerging issues that are expected to form the basis of further work of APFIC and the focus of the next regional consultative forum meeting were highlighted. These were: (i) illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU); and (ii) trade and standards. These are dealt with in more detail in paragraphs 94-112.

50. A summary of the challenges to fisheries and aquaculture was then presented by subsectoral areas. These comprise: (i) marine coastal fisheries (integrated coastal management, increasing benefits through better management); (ii) pelagic offshore fisheries (access to resources); (iii) demersal offshore fisheries (sustainable expansion); (iv) inland fisheries (competing water uses and environmental impacts from external factors); (v) aquaculture (site and feed constraints, increasing trade related issues).

51. Take home messages were that APFIC member countries remain a major supplier of fishery products and the contribution of the fisheries sector is critical to many states. Aquaculture is increasing, but there are several significant constraints. The changing trends in regional and international trade, production methods and consumption will impact the prices of fish and its availability. Major issues for the sustainable development of the sector include IUU fishing and the international and trade related issues of aquaculture and capture fishery products.

### **Responses by the Commission**

52. The Commission thanked the Secretariat for producing the APFIC 2006 overview paper, *Status and potential of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific (2006)*.

53. The chairperson noted the suggestion of some of the members regarding increased collaboration between regional fisheries organizations and members in terms of sharing information on fisheries and aquaculture to improve their management. In conclusion, he stressed that there was an urgent need for action by the APFIC members and partner organizations in addressing the future challenges. The Secretary responded to the Commission by advising that there are only two regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) in the APFIC region that have the mandate to manage fisheries – the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and the Western and Central Pacific Fishery Commission (WCPFC). Other regional organizations are not management bodies or arrangements. He pointed out that there is the possibility of developing management arrangements at subregional level to assist in resource assessments and implement better management.

54. The Commission recognized the high costs and constraints that countries faced in undertaking comprehensive stock assessments. Indonesia commented that there is a need for concrete action to overcome the problem of IUU fishing. Viet Nam highlighted the importance of fisheries in terms of food security and poverty alleviation and recognized the decline of marine fishery stocks in the region. The Government of Viet Nam would like to reduce the number of fishing vessels and explore the introduction of marine protected areas in an attempt to redress the declining status of coastal stocks.

55. The Commission praised the commitment of several members to reduce the number of fishing vessels and their efforts to reduce fishing capacity.

56. The Commission recognized the potential of aquaculture and the trends highlighted by the presentation. It was noted that there are constraints on carnivorous fish production and the issues of feed constraints and, to a lesser extent, limited supplies of seed.

57. The Commission emphasized the issue of food safety and trade, which is increasingly important to the sector, and there is an urgent need for improved training and capacity building in dealing with the issues in the global arena. It was hoped that there could be more collaboration with APFIC member countries on this issue.

58. Several members pointed out that the increasing costs associated with meeting the requirements of international trade (food safety development is costly to establish and there are also additional issues with costs linked to ecolabelling and certification), will need to be recovered and will certainly have an effect

on small-scale fisheries and farmers. This may lead to their further marginalization and possible exclusion from the sector and therefore contribute to increased poverty in this part of the sector. The Commission noted that there is a high degree of uncertainty as to the real effects of globalization on small-scale producers and that APFIC could possibly look into the preharvest aspects of aquaculture and fisheries, as this was an area that directly affects small-scale producers.

## **SELECTED ISSUES OF REGIONAL IMPORTANCE – LOW VALUE/TRASH FISH**

59. The Secretariat introduced this agenda item on the basis of document APFIC/06/4 summarizing the findings and recommendations of the regional consultative workshop held in Hanoi, Viet Nam, 7-9 June 2005 (report of the workshop – APFIC/06/Inf.5 and background paper – APFIC/06/Inf.6) and of the APFIC regional consultative forum meeting report on this theme (APFIC/06/4 Addendum 1).

60. The Secretariat reported on the outcomes of the Hanoi regional consultative workshop. In preparation for the workshop, APFIC commissioned reviews of low value/trash fish in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, the People's Republic of China, the Philippines and Thailand. A similar study carried out by the Australian Centre for Agriculture Research (ACIAR) in Viet Nam was also used. The percentage of low value/trash fish recorded in these countries ranged from 4 to 38 percent of the total marine capture landings, with a weighted average percentage across the region of 25 percent. Applying this ratio to the landed catch in 2003 gives a figure of 9.8 million tonnes being used for livestock/fish, and 29.5 million tonnes used for human consumption. As total aquaculture output in Asia for all fish (excluding molluscs and seaweeds) is estimated at 28.0 million tonnes, it is clear that the diversion of marine fish to aquaculture ultimately contributes to the very significant proportion (approximately 50 percent) of the total amount of fish provided to humans.

61. There are a number of issues related to the evolving trend of increases in the catches of low value/trash fish, especially in countries where it is being used as aquaculture feed. These include:

- future growth potential of aquaculture;
- animal protein supplies of very poor people in the region;
- sustainability of capture fisheries and related ecosystems;
- economic and environmental performance of both aquaculture and capture fisheries; and
- preharvesting and post-harvesting practices.

### **Responses by the Commission**

62. Various aspects were considered in the discussion of this agenda item by delegates and observers. These included the appropriate definition and use of terminology – it was felt that the word “trash” had negative connotations for such an important commodity; the availability of data and geographic coverage of analyses of the issue in the region; the measures taken to improve fisheries management and to discourage unselective and environmentally harmful fishing practices; the encouragement of the culture of non-carnivorous species, especially those that depend on direct feeding; the advantages of aquaculture practices that are integrated with agriculture and/or livestock; the need for further processing and quality improvements; and direct financial support needed to encourage the use of formulated feed.

63. Viet Nam questioned the reliability of the estimate for low value/trash fish landings presented in the working document. The APFIC Secretary agreed to follow up and make any necessary revision.



64. The Commission recognized that the challenges were in how to implement the various actions that involved difficult socio-economic issues, especially for small-scale fishers and fish farmers. Furthermore, it recognized the need for more positive examples of successful measures for management and the need to communicate these between member countries.

65. As mentioned earlier, the Commission recommended that the use of the term “trash fish” was misleading and that its use should be discouraged. It agreed with the following definition:

*“Low value fish” refers to fish that are generally of relatively low economic value and typically small sized. They can be used for either human consumption or as animal feeds (both fish and livestock). They may be used directly in both aquaculture to feed other fish or processed into fish meal/oil for incorporation into formulated diets. The same is true for human food, where the fish may be consumed directly, or further processed often using traditional methods of processing small fish.*

66. The Commission strongly recommended that the issues associated with the increasing trend in the production of low value fish taken from the APFIC region should be addressed by taking action on three fronts, covering both fishery and aquaculture initiatives: Improved management of fisheries; improved utilization of low value fish for human consumption; and improved feed for aquaculture.

### **Improved management of fisheries**

- Reduce trawling and pushnet effort and fishing capacity (and clearly monitor the effects of capacity reduction).
- Introduce improved selectivity of fishing practices/fishing gears, in particular gear to increase the size of fish captured.
- Introduce mechanisms for rights-based fisheries and co-management (to facilitate a reduction in the ‘race for fish’).
- Establish mechanisms to identify and protect juvenile nursery areas (refugia/closed areas, seasonal closure).
- Provide alternative income generating activities.
- Link fisheries and aquaculture policies to other sectoral policies (particularly agriculture) and to more general development policies.
- Introduce policies that provide incentives to carry out these actions.

### **Improved utilization of low value fish for human consumption**

- Improve post-harvest fish handling for human consumption and enhance food safety measures.
- Develop new fish products through processing.
- Promote the benefits of fish for improving food security and reducing poverty in the region.

### **Improved feeds for aquaculture**

Noting that aquaculture was growing at a rapid rate in the region and that feed for this growing industry continued, in large part, to be sourced (either directly or indirectly) from wild fish stocks, the region should:

- fast-track the change over from direct feeding to pellet feeding (noting that shrimp aquaculture is already based on pellet feed);
- reduce fish meal content of aquaculture feeds by substitution of suitable ingredients in pellets;
- invest in feed research for inland/marine species; and
- encourage integrated fish farming for the culture of herbivorous and omnivorous species.

## **SELECTED ISSUES OF REGIONAL IMPORTANCE – CO-MANAGEMENT, GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONS**

67. The Secretariat introduced this agenda item on the basis of document APFIC/06/5 summarizing the findings and recommendations of the regional consultative workshop Mainstreaming co-management in the Asia-Pacific region held in Siem Reap, Cambodia from 9 to 12 August 2005 (report of the workshop – APFIC/06/Inf.7 and background paper – APFIC/06/Inf.8) and of the APFIC RCFM report on this theme (APFIC/06/5 Addendum 1).

68. The Commission was informed that both governmental and non-governmental organizations are helping to improve the livelihoods of poor people who are dependent on aquatic resources by including these stakeholders in the planning and implementation of fisheries management. Many countries have adopted decentralization as the way to implement future fisheries management, and this often involves a partnership between government and the local communities (*i.e.* a co-management approach).

69. Numerous examples of successes using the approach have been documented. However, the approach is often supported by donor funding rather than from direct government funding, and as a consequence is largely confined to demonstration or pilot sites scattered throughout Asia and the Pacific region. The challenge is to find a way to make co-management a mainstream practice of both government and non-government organizations and communities.

70. Successful co-management activities typically have the following characteristics:

- empowerment of communities;
- agreed roles and responsibilities of the different players (this must include the whole hierarchy of players from national governments to local communities);
- legal and policy backing at all levels;
- people with skills in communication, natural resource management and problem solving; and
- use of traditional knowledge and traditional social structures (e.g. those used traditionally for decision-making and governance).

71. Challenges to the mainstreaming of co-management, including the levels of poverty and marginalization among fishers in the region, make it difficult for fishers to take an active role in fisheries management, and difficult for governments to regulate access. There is a lack of awareness and communication of the potential benefits of co-management. The lack of equity and power-sharing between government and resource users, especially small-scale fishing communities, limits the empowerment of resource users, especially in small-scale fishing communities, that would enable them to co-manage fisheries and to benefit from shared management arrangements.

72. National policy and legislative frameworks are often not conducive to fisheries co-management, and there are often insufficient institutional linkages and communication between relevant stakeholders. Moreover, many of the major stakeholders, including government and local organizations, lack personnel

with the requisite capacity to implement co-management successfully. These factors limit the establishment or emergence of cost-effective and efficient support and mechanisms for financing fisheries co-management at all levels. An overarching issue is the lack of integration of co-management with other policies such as those pertaining to decentralization and poverty reduction.

### **Responses by the Commission**

The Commission concurred with the need to mainstream co-management and several members emphasized the need for comprehensive implementation. It was concluded that co-management should not be left to the support of projects and donors, as this is usually short-term and not sustainable.

73. One of the major constraints on implementing successful co-management is the lack of adequate legal and policy support for it.

74. It was stressed that co-management relies on the commitment of the stakeholders and this is best achieved by providing them with strong, clear incentives, e.g. in the form of the benefits associated with their activities. It would be useful to identify the possible situations where such benefits exist (or potentially exist) as a focus for mainstreaming. It is also recognized that women's active participation in co-management is important for its success. The recommendations stress the need to build on existing institutions, particularly traditional systems or those that have arisen as the result of communities' self-empowerment.

75. The Commission discussed several aspects related to implementation and agreed that there is a need to review the issues of credit and financial support for co-management groups. Gender issues also need to be adequately addressed within the recommendations on co-management. There is also a need to recognize the existence of traditional arrangements and local arrangements that have arisen without government or project support. These arrangements sometimes intersect government arrangements and can thus be referred to as co-management arrangements. However, they may not receive institutional recognition because they have not arisen as part of a government or project-based initiative.

76. The Commission agreed with following definition for fisheries and aquaculture co-management:

*“Fisheries/aquaculture co-management is a partnership approach where government and the fishery/aquaculture resource users share the responsibility and authority for the management of a fishery or fisheries/aquaculture resources in an area, based on collaboration between themselves and with other stakeholders”.*

77. Noting that fisheries co-management includes both fisheries (marine and freshwater) and aquaculture activities, the Commission endorsed the recommendation that fisheries co-management be mainstreamed in national systems of management in the countries of Asia and the Pacific region, building on previous activities.

78. The Commission recommended that to mainstream co-management the member countries should:

- ensure that co-management addresses key national policy objectives such as reducing overexploitation of fish stocks and overcapacity in both marine and freshwater fisheries, poverty reduction, possibly through rights-based approaches;
- review, develop and amend national fishery policy and legislation, where necessary, to support fisheries and aquaculture co-management, in particular to support the right of stakeholders to be involved in management;

- invest adequate resources in developing co-management and allocate appropriate budgets for fisheries co-management practices at all levels, but note that it often takes significant time to build up the trust and capacity for successful co-management;
- define and communicate the respective roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, including government and regional/intergovernmental organizations;
- establish agreed objectives at the operational level for fisheries co-management through dialogue and negotiation with fishery communities and civil society organizations/NGOs;
- assist in the empowerment of communities, and ensure equitable distribution of the benefits of co-management, with special emphasis on the livelihoods of small-scale users;
- facilitate human and institutional capacity building at all appropriate levels across communities and scales, in particular ensure that government staff at all levels are adequately skilled and experienced to facilitate the implementation of fisheries co-management (focusing on participation, communication and building partnerships); and
- facilitate the creation of effective institutional arrangements and linkages among the major stakeholders at all levels, building on existing arrangements, including better cross-sectoral integration and communication where appropriate for fisheries co-management.

79. The Commission also endorsed the recommendation to all stakeholders to:

- share information and experiences on co-management between members, including information on costs and benefits, via lessons learned; and
- encourage research agencies to undertake applied research that meets the high priority needs of major stakeholders, in particular utilize traditional knowledge, management practices and experience. As a prerequisite, co-management stakeholders may need to develop mechanisms to prioritize and communicate research needs.

## **POLICY CHALLENGES**

80. The Secretariat introduced this agenda item on the basis of document APFIC/06/6 and the summary and conclusions of the regional consultative forum meeting (APFIC/06/6 Addendum 1).

81. The APFIC Secretariat commissioned a policy analysis to examine the main drivers of policy change and to report back to members on the main policy directions being taken in fisheries and aquaculture. The study examined national policies and plans relating to, for example, extension of fishing effort to offshore areas, creation of alternative livelihoods to assist fishers to leave fisheries or supplement fishing livelihoods, growth targets for aquaculture and capture fisheries, co-management initiatives, prioritizing poverty alleviation targets and respective foci on industrial or small-scale fisheries. Although the details of fisheries and aquaculture policy differed between countries, the study found a surprising degree of similarity between the main policy directions and strategies to manage the sector.

### **Responses by the Commission**

82. The Commission expressed its appreciation for the study and endorsed the overall findings of the APFIC regional consultative forum meeting, which had noted that in most cases, countries in the region had ‘good policy content’ and elements of ‘best practice’ contained within their fisheries and aquaculture policies. All policies that exist in the Asian APFIC countries refer to the need to tackle IUU fishing and propose the use of fish refugia, reserves or protected areas or similar area-based restrictions. Almost all policies in the region state food security, poverty alleviation, community/co-management, and

decentralization, fishing capacity reduction, improvements in administrative efficiency, and cross-sectoral collaboration as policy objectives.

83. The Commission also considered a number of concerns that had been raised by the forum meeting with respect to policy in the region. These were:

- There are inconsistencies between the national policies of countries (particularly neighbouring countries) that would benefit from a degree of harmonization.
- There may be conflicting national policies between fishery and aquaculture subsectors and with other activities (e.g. trade, conservation and environment).
- There is still a need in some countries to develop specific fishery policies.
- There is a lack of reference in many national policies to international and bilateral arrangements.
- Most policies in the region refer to the expansion of offshore fisheries, even though the potential of offshore resources and the economic viability is in many cases not well known.
- The need to introduce rights-based fisheries management is not widely included in policies in the region.
- Whereas most policies refer to both poverty alleviation and increases in exports as key objectives, few are specific about the need to address distributional aspects and impacts of trade.
- Most policies refer to the need to increase value-added in the context of preharvest and post-harvest activities, but there is less mention of the need/ability to increase value-added throughout the supply chain (especially at the harvesting level) and in related activities.
- Microfinance as a form of credit is increasingly recognized as an important tool for alleviating poverty, but is not widely referred to in fishery policies in the region.
- Generally in policy documents, there are few if any references to gender-related issues, although marginalized groups in general may be covered under references to poverty alleviation.
- Where fisheries management is in place in the region, the costs are increasing. However, generally within the region, there is relatively limited investment in fisheries management, and policies in the region do not always specifically indicate the new sources of revenue that will be required.

84. With respect to implementation issues, the forum noted that:

- Major challenges exist in many countries with respect to operationalizing fisheries policy, and in the detailed planning required for implementation of policy, i.e. specification of activities, allocation of responsibilities, use of indicators, provision of appropriate budgets, etc.
- Targets for increasing capture fisheries production may be based more on economic planning goals rather than sustainable use of resources and a realistic assessment about resource potential.
- Targets for aquaculture production may not reflect future challenges and potential future resource constraints (as well as opportunities for increasing aquaculture production).
- Restricted or reserved areas (including MPAs) may not always be effective or appropriate in certain cases, often lying outside the mandate of the national fisheries department.

85. With respect to poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) and national development plans (NDPs), the forum noted that, in general, the fisheries sector is relatively well-covered in national PRSPs and

NDPs, especially in countries where: (i) fisheries exports make up a large proportion of agricultural exports; (ii) fisheries make a large contribution to meeting domestic protein requirements; (iii) large numbers are employed in the fisheries sector; and (iv) there is a high level of rural poverty. However, the forum also observed that countries in the region could be doing more to link with and influence the policies and activities of international agencies, e.g. UNDP and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) Sub-Committee on Poverty Reduction Practices.

86. The forum encouraged countries to fulfil their targets indicated in PRSPs and NDPs (noting that policy is a dynamic process, and to ensure the inclusion of fisheries in new PRSP and other future policy documents). It considered that support to the fishery sector would be better directed to improved management of fisheries (including management of fishing capacity) and aquaculture and noted with concern that specific support to the fishery sector had been de-prioritized by the Asian Development Bank.

87. With regard to regional environmental management of large marine ecosystems (LMEs), the forum noted that ensuring the effective inclusion of fisheries issues into broader frameworks for marine management is an emerging policy challenge for the region. Efforts to meet this challenge are constrained by:

- limited practical experience in the implementation of such approaches;
- a low-level of awareness of the extent of the partnerships required to manage fisheries; and
- the fact that environmental management and environmental initiatives do not involve mechanisms that foster the effective integration of fisheries considerations into multiple-use management frameworks.

88. Regional experience suggests that overcoming these challenges will require, first, improving the understanding of ecosystem and fishery linkages among fishing communities, managers, and policy makers, as a basis for integrated fisheries and habitat/ecosystem management, and, second, building the capacity of both fisheries and environment ministries and departments to ensure that issues facing the fisheries sector are integrated into overall marine management frameworks. Conduits for integrating fisheries into overall management frameworks should: (i) focus on linkages between fish life-cycles and critical habitats; (ii) be easy for fishing communities, local government officials, and fisheries managers to relate to; and (iii) provide a suitable platform for the fisheries sector in best representing fisheries issues in fora relating to multiple-use marine management.

89. The forum noted that whereas LME programmes engage in specific useful aspects of fisheries management, they do not deal with some of the most important aspects such as capacity management. It was therefore suggested that LME programmes should make an effort to incorporate important fisheries management actions into their programmes.

90. In discussing the forum's findings and conclusions, the Commission highlighted various additional issues that require attention in policy formulation and especially in policy implementation, and the general need for pro-active and consultative approaches. These included: (i) the need for enhancing the economic and social status of fisherwomen whose roles are critical in poverty alleviation; (ii) fisheries management and aquaculture growth; (iii) the allocation of adequate financial resources to assist in the reduction of fishing capacity and to address IUU fishing; (iv) the management and resolution of conflicts between large-scale and small-scale fisheries; (v) better and more secure livelihoods of small-scale fishing communities through *inter alia* better safety at sea, conditions of labour and health; (vi) the encouragement of policy harmonization across the region but at the same time respecting policy differences resulting from differences in economic and social development; (vii) regional and bilateral cooperation and agreements to better regulate fisheries and strengthen MCS; (viii) the need for better information and research to inform policy-making; and (ix) the potential of biotechnology in better fish utilization.

91. The Commission concluded that, in general, the region is well served by policy and strategies, but that future work should be aimed more at implementing these policies rather than focusing on policy development alone. It was noted that the increased participation of the stakeholders in the formulation of policy would facilitate its implementation.

## **EMERGING ISSUES (INCLUDING ACTIONS FROM COFI)**

92. The Secretariat introduced this agenda item on the basis of document APFIC/06/7 and the summary and conclusions of the regional consultative forum meeting. The Commission was informed of the two emerging issues that are covered in the 2006 edition of APFIC's *Status and potential of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific* (APFIC/06/Inf.9). These were illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU) and aquaculture and fishery products standards and trade. Both of these issues are considered to be very important to the supply of and the demand for fish.

### **Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing**

93. IUU fishing threatens the sustainable harvesting of fish from coastal or inland fisheries of all APFIC members and many benefits can be achieved by substantially reducing IUU fishing. These include the obvious benefits of increased catches and profit, as well as increased support for sustainable livelihoods. Other benefits could include improved safety at sea and regional security through rapid vessel identification and vessel monitoring.

94. In many other parts of the world, regional fisheries management organizations often provide a forum and an institutional framework to address such issues as IUU. The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) has management responsibility for tuna stocks within its region and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) has responsibility for management of highly migratory species in the western and central Pacific. There is no regional fisheries management organization or organizations with specific responsibility for the management and coordination of fisheries issues that may bring together different countries in the subregions of Asia and the Pacific region. The establishment of such a body or bodies with specific competence in the field of management of the resources could bring significant benefits and should be considered. This could be based on subregional areas (e.g. Southeast Asia, South Asia etc. or based on large marine ecosystem boundaries, such as the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem).

95. The Commission was informed that the issues associated with IUU in many parts of Asia and the Pacific region, tend to be national in nature and scope, especially in Southeast Asia where there is a very limited area of high seas. However, the IUU issues in Asia and the Pacific region cannot be addressed effectively unless there is some agreement among countries to cooperate, either bilaterally or subregionally in deterring and reducing IUU.

96. The Commission recognized that excess capacity is one of the main drivers of IUU fishing and there is an urgent need for countries to begin to manage the issue of overcapacity of their national fishing fleets, to review national legislation with regards to IUU fishing and to support international initiatives on the management of shared stocks and IUU fishing. The effective measurement of fleet capacity includes managing information relating to licensing, registration and resource assessments. It is also important not to overlook the participation and employment of women in the sector (especially in post-harvest fisheries activities). Region-based action plans would be a useful method for monitoring progress towards achieving the respective goals.

97. Regional partners also recognized the direct link between overcapacity and IUU fishing and the need to explore the context and how to manage overcapacity. This is also linked to the effective introduction of co-management, the introduction of rights-based fisheries, the empowering of communities and the strengthening of local fisheries institutions.

98. The Commission recommended that APFIC prioritize the issue of capacity reduction and its relationship to fisheries management and IUU as a main theme for its forthcoming workplan, and as a part of the regional consultative forum meeting.

### **Fish trade and standards**

99. As trade in fish products increases, food quality and safety issues, along with related issues of labelling, traceability and certification, are becoming increasingly important for countries in the APFIC region. The globalization and expansion of the international food trade have led to the development of fish safety and quality standards that have a significant impact on the international fish trade.

100. The Commission agreed that food safety and quality control is having an increasing impact on APFIC members access to lucrative international and regional markets and the trade implications of food safety and the quality of the seafood are expected to increase in the years to come. Whereas many of these measures focus of improving the quality and safety of seafood products, there is now increasing attention being paid to the methods of production (e.g. ecolabelling), both in capture fisheries and aquaculture.

101. The Commission recommended that there is an urgent need for APFIC members to become more involved in many of the activities and processes involved with the setting and implementation of standards, rules and regulations including the *Codex Alimentarius* process and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). This will require awareness and capacity building so that APFIC members can participate effectively in these sorts of fora.

102. The requirements of ecolabelling, traceability, sustainability of harvesting, fishery certification, and better management practices in aquaculture all present unique challenges to countries with large numbers of small-scale producers. The Commission expressed concern that there are obvious constraints on developing countries in complying with the rapidly changing requirements being set by global markets and the standards that are being established under both mandatory and voluntary certification schemes.

103. In order to capitalize on the potential benefits offered by increased market access and global trade there is a need for sustained support and capacity building for small-scale farmers and fishers and the related national institutions to enable them to address these issues. There is also a need for support for the practical implementation of national schemes. In this regard it is important that there is appropriate evaluation of the benefits and costs of entering such schemes. The Commission felt that this would be a useful area for APFIC to support.

### **Responses by the Commission**

104. The Commission reaffirmed that the overarching focus of APFIC should be small-scale fisheries and rural aquaculture that lead to poverty reduction, especially for women and socially deprived communities.

105. The Commission recommended that the two priority areas to be included in the next workplan of APFIC should be managing fishing capacity and fish trade and standards.



**(i) Managing fishing capacity**

This should include:

- reducing and combating IUU fishing;
- improving co-management in both the small-scale and large-scale subsectors;
- a special focus on low value fish (to implement the fishery management recommendations made under agenda 5);
- developing management plans at all levels, including region-based plans;
- resource assessments; and
- promoting regional and subregional cooperation.

**(ii) Fish trade and standards**

This should include:

- both aquaculture and capture fishery products;
- issues of ecolabelling and traceability;
- better preharvest management;
- bilateral cooperation; and
- improved sharing of information and human capacity building.

106. In selecting these key flagship issues the Commission noted that they encompassed a number of critical issues for the region and also provided some follow-up to the work of the Commission over the past two years and the recommendations made on reducing the catch of low value fish and mainstreaming fisheries/aquaculture co-management. It was also agreed that follow-up actions would include the development of projects to support the actions; the provision of technical advice by FAO, APFIC and its partners; monitoring of progress and reporting back to the thirtieth session of APFIC.

107. The Commission noted that sustainable aquaculture development requires research and development of alternative feeds and the development of non-fish based feeds are a priority if the APFIC region is to sustain its aquaculture growth. The issues of low value/trash fish can be dealt with by reducing or managing the demand for fresh fish. By using fish meal more efficiently and by finding alternative resources for fish feeds. The Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA) is a possible regional mechanism for addressing this issue. With regard to implementation measures for improving feeds, it would be possible to develop a follow-up action using the existing arrangements and the collaboration of APFIC and the other partners.

108. The Commission also noted that the use of a co-management approach is a possible mechanism for ensuring sustainable aquaculture development and capture fisheries and this encompasses best management approaches, group organization and more effective interaction between producers and regulatory bodies. This also reflects the fact that the increasing costs needed to manage the sector cannot be met solely by governments. More self-regulation accompanied by stronger monitoring can be more cost effective.

109. The chairperson emphasized the broad range of work that needed to be done and in this respect he welcomed collaboration among members, regional partners and other organizations in the region.

## **Other emerging issues in the fisheries sector**

110. The Commission noted that there are some common priority areas shared by the principle recommendations of COFI and the seventieth session of the APFIC executive committee. The APFIC executive committee also noted the importance of a number of areas which were identified by COFI, in particular: (i) food safety and quality; (ii) eco-labelling; live fish trade; (iii) fishing capacity management; (iv) more environmentally sound aquaculture; and (v) the impacts of subsidies.

111. In selecting the two priority flagship issues, as identified above, many of the priorities put forward by COFI and the APFIC executive committee have been covered. However, the Commission noted that there are a number of other issues not being adequately addressed (e.g. the impact of climate change on ornamental fish) and encouraged other organizations to cover these gaps.

## **Recent actions of members**

112. In July 2006, the Republic of Korea decided to ratify the 1995 UN Fish Stock Agreement (UNFSA) as it sees this as an important step in enhancing the nations fishing activities and emphasising responsible fisheries. The Republic of Korea will also be looking at ecolabelling and the introduction of the ecosystem approach to fishery management. It also has a new focus on improving the social status of women in fishing communities.

113. India has recently conducted a marine fishery census to get information on marine fishers and fishery communities and intends to repeat this activity every five years.

## **WORK PLAN 2006-2008**

114. The Secretariat introduced the framework for the work plan to be carried out by APFIC in the biennium starting in August 2006. This is to commence immediately following this Twenty-ninth Session of APFIC and will lead up to the Second Regional Consultative Forum Meeting and the Thirtieth Session in August 2008 (document APFIC/06/8). The work plan schedule takes note of the biennial session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), the concurrent regional fisheries bodies (RFB) meetings, APFIC Executive Committee and the APFIC main Sessions. It also includes the convening of regional consultative workshops based on the new priority themes of the Commission.

115. The Commission, in agreeing with the overall timing outlined in the framework, recommended that the workshops be timed so that they can provide input to the FAO Sub-Committee on Trade and the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture.

116. As agreed in the Twenty-eighth Session of APFIC, a comprehensive review of APFIC and its new role as a regional consultative forum will be conducted and reported to the thirtieth session of APFIC in 2008.

117. The Commission agreed to two regional consultative workshops to be organized by the Secretariat to cover the two emerging issues identified by APFIC, namely managing fishing capacity and fish trade and standards. The Commission requested the Secretariat to prepare prospectuses and background materials for these workshops and to share these with the members for their input.

118. Nepal requested that APFIC convene a workshop on inland fisheries and mainstreaming socially deprived fishers. The Secretariat advised that it would try to co-convene such a workshop with other interested partners such as the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF).

119. Taking into account these considerations, the work plan was endorsed by the Commission and is included as Appendix F.

120. The APFIC Secretariat will also continue to develop and update its website. The website has been developed to inform members and any other interested parties about fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific region and provides links to other subregional organizations and projects and relevant statistics. Publications will remain an important media for information dissemination and exchange. The biennial *Status and potential of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific* will be updated to include 2006 data in 2008. The Secretariat will also publish reviews and up-to-date information on the APFIC selected emerging issues as well as other high profile issues in the region.

121. APFIC Secretariat will continue to provide direct advice to members through workshops, meetings and projects (including backstopping of country and regional projects). To promote APFIC activities and ensure better coordination with other regional fishery bodies and arrangements, the APFIC Secretariat will continue to collaborate with these as appropriate. The Commission noted that it was important to introduce the outcomes of the regional consultative forum meeting into global fora such as FAO's Committee on Fisheries as well as the Sub-Committee on Trade and the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture.

### **Presentations by international and regional organizations**

122. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to have been informed of the work of nine international/regional organizations operating in Asia and the Pacific region and welcomed the offer by these organizations to collaborate on activities of mutual interest. The Commission recognized the importance of these partnerships in promoting responsible fisheries and aquaculture in the region.

123. These APFIC partners were unanimous in their appreciation of the arrangements and hospitality of the Government of Malaysia as the host country and thanked APFIC for the opportunity to participate in the regional consultative forum meeting and the twenty-ninth session.

124. BOBP-IGO has four member countries. The BOBP-IGO focus has been on implementing the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and on promoting the safety at sea and health of small-scale fishers. Workshops and consultations have been made to support member countries on these issues among others. BOBP-IGO will continue to promote the health and safety of the small-scale fisheries on behalf of its member countries. Work on co-management is ongoing and they are also involved in a coastal resource management programme supported by the Government of Japan. BOBP-IGO was very pleased to take part in this important meeting.

125. The Network of Agriculture in Asia-Pacific (NACA) has a newly appointed Director-General, Professor Sena De Silva. NACA members were pleased to be at the APFIC twenty-ninth session as observers and to represent member countries and aquaculture in the region. NACA pointed out that issues such as low value fish/trash fish involved linkages to both aquaculture and fisheries and that they were happy to work with APFIC on these issues. Co-management in both fisheries and aquaculture is needed and, also on this issue, NACA is happy to work with APFIC and its member countries. Many of the people active in APFIC as commissioners are also active members of the NACA council. The regional consultative forum meeting has clarified some aspects of NACA's programmes that are related but lie outside of NACA's direct technical area. The forum has also provided clear guidance as to where action can be taken and given clear direction that NACA can use in developing its programme of work. The concept of co-management in aquaculture also gives a new dimension that can be incorporated into the ongoing work of the organization, especially in areas such as mobilizing farmer organizations.

126. The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) is a regional fishery body and is comprised of 16 members and one territory. The Secretariat is based in the Solomon Islands. The primary task of the agency is to coordinate the development of harmonized policies for fisheries development and fisheries management in the Pacific region. The representative noted the commonality of issues faced by APFIC members and FFA, and stated that there is much that could be shared. Noting the issue of harmonization of fisheries policies, FFA has considerable experience of this (e.g. common minimum terms for fisheries access agreements, common fisheries management frameworks, vessel monitoring system requirements). He noted that harmonization did not mean that these arrangements are totally identical, but that they are based on some basic common principles and are built into the national legal and regulatory frameworks.

127. The Partnership for Environmental Management in the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA) expressed their appreciation to the APFIC Secretariat and the host country Malaysia for inviting PEMSEA to this important meeting. PEMSEA is a regional programme on building partnerships in environmental management for the seas of East Asia, funded by the Global Environment Facility, implemented by the UNDP and executed by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). PEMSEA have a membership of 14 countries in the East Asian Seas Region and have in the past 12 years been assisting these countries in strengthening integrated ocean and coastal governance by building interagency, multisectoral partnerships at regional, subregional, national and local levels. The representative from PEMSEA highlighted the strategy for sustainable development in the seas of East Asia, and noted areas of possible future collaboration. She also informed the session about the forthcoming East China Sea Congress and the role of APFIC, FAO, SEAFDEC and UNEP/GEF South China Sea in organizing two workshops.

128. SEAFDEC extended its appreciation to the Government of Malaysia and APFIC for extending the kind invitation to attend the meeting. It also congratulated APFIC Secretariat for its achievements during the past years. APFIC and FAO have complemented SEAFDEC efforts to assist its member countries in better addressing and promoting fisheries and aquaculture initiatives in the region. At the recent regional consultative forum meeting, which was held prior to this APFIC session, it was demonstrated that the partnership between SEAFDEC and APFIC was very useful and that it would be continued and even enhanced in the future on issues like mainstreaming co-management, and targeting the small-scale subsector, which is of great importance for the region. SEAFDEC also noted that improving the quality and safety standards in fish and fishery products has been among the foremost activities of the organization over the past years. This is in line with the ASEAN policy on increasing the region's competitiveness in the context of international fish trade with special focus given to small-scale fisheries and farmers.

129. The Asian Fisheries Society (AFS) informed the session of its background and activities. It aims to link fisheries scientists in the region to create and propagate awareness of capture fisheries and aquaculture. AFS also promotes cooperation with the World Aquaculture Society and its Asian chapters. AFS has three branches and affiliations with the China Fisheries Society and the Malaysia Fishery Society. AFS disseminates information through its scientific journals, and also provides scholarships. AFS will also convene the 'Eighth Asian Fisheries Forum' in Cochin, India in 2008.

130. The International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF) thanked the Commission for the opportunity to share some of its activities and goals with the commission. ICSF has been actively collaborating with APFIC for a number of years in both the post-tsunami rehabilitation effort and represented small-scale fish workers issues in the APFIC regional co-management workshop in Siem Reap. ICSF appreciated the effort made by APFIC to broaden participation and dialogue and requested that the Commission continued to place emphasis on small scale fisheries and fishworkers. The Commission was informed of a recent publication by ICSF containing 140 legal instruments categorized into 14 themes. This is published as the *Handbook on international legal instruments of relevance to fisheries and fishing communities* and can be found on-line at <http://www.legal.icsf.net>. This information resource will be updated regularly.

## **OTHER MATTERS**

### **Discussion on membership**

131. The Secretariat introduced the changing emphasis of APFIC's work as a regional consultative forum and the increasing focus on issues of common interest to members. The Commission noted that several members have not participated in the regular activities of the Commission for a number of years. The Commission recommended that the Secretariat should proceed with reviewing the issue of membership and possible withdrawal of members that no longer wish to be part of the Commission. It was suggested that a possible criteria for identifying these members would be non-participation in the last three APFIC sessions.

132. The Commission also encouraged greater participation by non-members in the Commission as observers. The Secretariat clarified that under the APFIC agreement any country that is a member or associate member of FAO or the UN can request to participate as an observer.

### **Outgoing APFIC Secretary**

133. The Commission noted that the Secretary of APFIC, Mr Derek Staples would shortly be retiring from FAO and thanked him for his considerable contribution to the work of the Commission and for the excellent work that has been done in successfully reshaping APFIC as a regional consultative forum.

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

134. Indonesia and the Republic of Korea were unanimously elected chairperson and vice-chairperson of the Commission, respectively.

135. Australia and Pakistan were unanimously elected to serve as members of the seventy-first executive committee, in addition to the new chair, the vice-chair and the outgoing chair (Malaysia).

## **DATE AND PLACE OF THE THIRTIETH SESSION OF APFIC**

136. The Commission accepted with great pleasure the offer of Indonesia to host the seventieth session of the APFIC executive committee in 2007 and the next regional consultative forum meeting in conjunction with the Thirtieth APFIC session in early August 2008. The exact dates and venues of the sessions will be decided by the Director-General of FAO in consultation with the chairperson and the authorities of the host country.

## **ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

137. In adopting the report, the Commission unanimously agreed to record its deep appreciation to the Government of Malaysia for the generous hospitality accorded to the Commission. This has contributed in large measure to the successful accomplishment of its work.

138. In his concluding remarks, the chairperson of APFIC expressed his appreciation for the active participation of the delegates and declared the Twenty-ninth Session of APFIC closed.

139. The report of the session was adopted on 23 August 2006.

## AGENDA

**Monday, 21 August 2006**

- 08.00 – 09.00 Registration
- 09.00 – 10.30 1. Opening of the Session
- 10.30 – 11.00 Morning tea/Coffee
- 11.00 – 12.30 2. Adoption of the Agenda and arrangements for the Session (APFIC/06/1)  
3. Inter-sessional activities of APFIC (APFIC/06/2)  
4. Status and potential of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia-Pacific (APFIC/06/3)
- 12.30 – 14.00 Lunch
- 14.00 – 15.30 5. Selected issues of regional importance – the low value/trash fish (APFIC/06/4)  
  - Report from the Regional Consultative Forum Meeting
  - Country responses
  - Partners and donor comments
- 15.30 – 16.00 Coffee/Tea Break
- 16.00 – 17.30 6. Selected issues of regional importance – co-management, governance and institutions (APFIC/06/5)  
  - Report from the Regional Consultative Forum Meeting
  - Country responses
  - Partners and donor comments

**Tuesday, 22 August 2006**

- 09.00 – 10.30 7. Policy challenges (APFIC/06/6)  
  - Report from the Regional Consultative Forum Meeting
  - Country responses
  - Partners and donor comments
- 10.30 – 11.00 Morning Tea/Coffee
- 11.00 – 12.30 8. Emerging issues (including actions from COFI) (APFIC/06/7)  
  - Report from the Regional Consultative Forum Meeting
  - Country responses
  - Partners and donor comments
- 12.30 – 14.30 Lunch
- 14.30 – 15.30 9. Work plan of major issues for APFIC focus in subsequent biennium (APFIC/06/8)  
10. Other matters  
  - Consideration of membership
- 15.30 – 16.00 Coffee/Tea Break
- 16.00 – 16.30 11. Election of Officers  
12. Date and place of the Thirtieth Session of APFIC

**16.30 – 17.30 Statements from Partners****Wednesday, 23 August 2006**

- 08.00 – 12.30 Field Trip
- 12.30 – 14.00 Lunch
- 14.00 – 15.00 13. Adoption of the Report

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## LIST OF DOCUMENTS

**A. Working documents:**

APFIC/06/1	Provisional Agenda and Timetable
APFIC/06/2	Inter-sessional activities of APFIC (includes 3 addendums)
APFIC/06/3	Overview – Status and potential of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific
APFIC/06/4	Selected issues of regional importance – low value/trash fish
APFIC/06/04 Add.1	Selected issues of regional importance – low value/trash fish
APFIC/06/5	Selected issues of regional importance – co-management, governance and institutions
APFIC/06/5 Add.1	Selected issues of regional importance – co-management, governance and institutions
APFIC/06/6	Policy challenges
APFIC/06/6 Add.1	Policy challenges
APFIC/06/7	Emerging issues (including actions from COFI)
APFIC/06/7 Add.1	Emerging issues (including actions from COFI)
APFIC/06/8	APFIC’s Work Plan 2006/08

**B. Information Documents:**

APFIC/06/Inf.1	Provisional list of documents
APFIC/06/Inf.2*	Provisional list of participants and observers
APFIC/06/Inf.3	Report of the Twenty-eighth Session of APFIC, Chiang Mai, Thailand, 3-5 August 2004
APFIC/06/Inf.4	Report of the Seventieth Session of the APFIC Executive Committee, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 23-25 August 2005
APFIC/06/Inf.5	Report of the regional consultative workshop on low value and “trash fish” in the Asia-Pacific region, Hanoi, Viet Nam, 7-9 June 2005
APFIC/06/Inf.6	Asian fisheries today: The production and use of low value/trash fish from marine fisheries in the Asia-Pacific region. RAP publication 2005/16
APFIC/06/Inf.7	Report of the regional consultative workshop on mainstreaming fisheries co-management, Siem Reap, Cambodia, 9-12 August 2005
APFIC/06/Inf.8	Mainstreaming fisheries co-management in the Asia-Pacific. RAP publication 2005/24
APFIC/06/Inf.9*	Draft document – Status and potential of fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific

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\* to be distributed at the Session.

**Welcome Remarks by  
Y.B. Dato' Junaidi Bin Che Ayub  
Director-General of Fisheries, Malaysia and APFIC Chairperson**

Mr Mokhtar Ismail Undersecretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry, Malaysia

Mr Ndiaga Gueye, Chief, International Institutions and Liaison Service, FAO Fisheries Department

Heads of Departments & Agencies under the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry

Distinguished Delegates, Observers and Guests

Dato'-Dato'/Datin-Datin,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC), I would like to thank Mr Mokhtar Ismail, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry representing the Hon. Tan Sri Dato' Sri Abi Musa Asa'ari bin Mohamed Nor, Secretary-General Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry Malaysia for his presence here and his consent to officiate the Twenty-ninth Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC).

To all the delegates and observers attending the Twenty-ninth Session of the APFIC as well as to all FAO officials, may I take this opportunity to welcome all of you to Malaysia. I hope you will enjoy your short stay here. To some of the delegates who were here since the 16<sup>th</sup> August attending the APFIC Regional Forum, I hope that you had an enjoyable trip to the historical city of Malacca.

To our Distinguished Guests who have been able to give us some of their time at this function, may I extend APFIC's sincere appreciation and thanks.

APFIC sessions take place once in two years. It is a consultative forum for member countries of APFIC and regional and international organization to work in partnership to promote the sustainable development of fisheries resources and the rational management of fisheries and aquaculture in the Asia-Pacific region.

The last two years since the Twenty-eighth Session of APFIC in Thailand, have seen a lot of activities accomplished. The Executive Committee of APFIC which met here in Kuala Lumpur from 23-25 August 2005 expressed satisfaction with the progress. I would like to express APFIC's gratitude and appreciation to FAO and APFIC Secretariat for their dedication to meeting the objectives of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission.

This Twenty-ninth Session of APFIC will also have a special task related to the outcome of the Regional Consultative Forum: "Reforming Fisheries and Aquaculture in the Asia-Pacific" which was held from 16-19 August 2006. This is the first Regional Consultative Forum that has been held to discuss and endorse strategies and policies for fisheries development and management including associated action plans developed to address issues raised. Follow-up plans would have to be proposed for this region.

With the changing role of APFIC and the need to ensure the sustainability of the fisheries and aquaculture sector in the Asia-Pacific region, it is necessary for APFIC to study ways and means to make sure that the action plans can be implemented. This, I believe will be another challenging task for the present Twenty-ninth Session of APFIC.

Lastly, I am confident that we can all come up with definite programme of action for the next two years that can be of benefit to the fisheries development and management in the Asia-Pacific region.

Thank you.



**Address by  
Mr Ichiro Nomura, Assistant Director-General, Fisheries Department  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**

Your Excellency, the Hon. Y.B. Tan Sri Dato' Sri Abi Musa Asa'ari bin Mohamed Nor, Secretary-General, Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry, Malaysia

Y.B. Dato' Junaidi bin Che Ayub, Director General of Fisheries, Malaysia and APFIC Chairperson;

APFIC Members;

Partner organizations and NGOs;

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of Mr Jacques Diouf, Director-General of FAO, I welcome you all to the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) to be held here in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from 21 to 23 August 2006.

This is a very special Session of APFIC as it represents a new direction for APFIC as a regional consultative forum. The role and function of APFIC has now been under review now since the 25<sup>th</sup> Session held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, 1996. This review process has included developing a series of options for the future of APFIC, a Special Session that was held in Rome in 1999, extensive consultation with Members and the Commissions agreement on the way forward at the 28<sup>th</sup> Session in Thailand in 2004.

At the 28<sup>th</sup> Session it was agreed that APFIC could best serve its members by becoming a regional consultative forum. This forum would provide its Members a neutral platform to examine issues affecting the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture across Member States. This would cover both issues of regional relevance and also national level issues common to a number of the members. The focus for the biennium 2004/05 has been on small-scale fisheries and rural aquaculture and includes the holding of a major Consultative Forum Meeting every two years based on number of inter-sessional workshops on selected issues, which the Commission considers to be of major regional importance.

This Session is the first to consider the outcomes of that process and the outputs from the first Regional Consultative Forum Meeting which was held in Kuala Lumpur, 16-19 August 2006. Input into this forum meeting were the recommendations of two APFIC Regional Workshops – one on “Low value and trash fish in the Asia-Pacific region” held in Hanoi, Viet Nam 7-9 June 2005 and another on “Mainstreaming Fisheries Co-management” held in Siem Reap, Cambodia 9-12 August 2005.

The overall theme for the Consultative Forum Meeting was “Reforming fisheries in aquaculture in Asia-Pacific”. Growth in capture fisheries, especially those of marine waters, has slowed considerably over the past decade as the harvesting of fisheries has met its natural and economic limits. In many cases this has, unfortunately, also resulted in depleted fish stocks and fisheries which are performing below their fullest potential. In the case of Asian aquaculture, the growth of this sector has been staggering, especially from the People's Republic of China, but this sector is also now also facing resource constraints.

APFIC recognizes the need for improved management of the region's natural resources and a need for more sustainable development. The recommendations from the Regional Consultative Forum will be presented to Commissioners for their consideration. It hoped, that unlike in the past, where all the issues were recognized and acknowledged, this new process will lead to decisions for affirmative action which can be undertaken by each Member. It will also reveal human capacity gaps which could be addressed

through help from other regional partners and donors. This process has been guided by your Executive Committee who last met in August 2005.

The Commission will also be asked to identify the major theme for APFIC biennium work plan for 2006/08 and identify two issues that will be focus of APFIC's work. The Executive Committee has suggested a number of topics in its last meeting. From these, the APFIC Secretariat has carried out a review of developments in policy for fisheries and aquaculture across the region. The Secretariat has also highlighted two major issues in the region for special attention. These are firstly, food quality and safety in the context of trade, and secondly, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Both of these issues will have a major impact on the future supply and demand for seafood in the region.

Before I conclude my remarks, I would just like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has enthusiastically contributed to the organization of this 29<sup>th</sup> Session of APFIC. In particular, I would also like to thank Malaysia and the Chair of APFIC for kindly hosting this meeting and making everyone feel welcome.

I wish you well in your deliberations and trust that the two years of preparation that went into this Session will result in tangible outcomes.

Thank you.

**Opening Speech by  
the Hon. Tan Sri Dato' Sri' Abi' Musa Asa'ari Bin Mohamed Nor, Secretary-General,  
Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry, Malaysia**

The Hon. Dato' Junaidi bin Che Ayub, Director General of Fisheries, Department of Fisheries, Malaysia

Mr Ndiaga Gueye, Chief, International Institutions and Liaison Service, FAO Fisheries Department

Heads of Departments & Agencies under the Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry

Distinguished Delegates, Observers and Guests

Dato'/Datin/Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning,

The Government of Malaysia is deeply honoured to host this Twenty-ninth Session of Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission. May I join the Chairperson of the Twenty-ninth Session of APFIC who is the Director-General of Fisheries Malaysia, in wishing you "Selamat Datang ke Malaysia" or "Welcome to Malaysia".

The Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission has a long history evolving from an advisory council (Indo-Pacific Fishery Council – IPFC) into an action-orientated commission (Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission). It has sponsored numerous workshops, seminars and published countless reports.

I cannot pretend to be an expert in fisheries but I am impressed by the range of subjects covered by APFIC. You have given meticulous attention to almost everything fishy under the sun, coastal fisheries, inland fisheries, aquaculture, fish trade, trash fish/low value fish, main streaming co-management and all the fishery issues raised by FAO Committee on Fisheries. Let me congratulate APFIC for the excellent work you have done so far over your fifty (50) years existence.

In many developing countries, fisheries are multi-species and multi-gear in nature and are characterized by a large number of small fishing vessels and many traditionally or artisanal fishing appliances. Fisheries are being harvested by fishers from different communities with different social, economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. The urgency to meet the increasing demands for fish and fish products has placed intense pressure on the resources. This will continue and in many areas, fisheries resources are heavily if not over exploited. However, decline of the fisheries resources is not caused solely by the problem of over exploitation but also degradation of the marine environment and habitat.

It is indeed clear that there are many factors and issues that need to be considered holistically in our effort to understand and better manage our fisheries. The Agenda 21 of the Earth Summit at Rio in 1992, agreed that social, economic development be integrated with environmental development. This is very relevant to our fisheries and this has to be considered for the sound management of our fisheries.

The lack of gear selectivity in many fisheries that leads to substantial fish by-catch and discards is an additional management concern. Management regime through the allocation of fishing rights through co-management is being promulgated. This session will address the outcomes of the trash fish and co-management workshops that was organized by APFIC and policy recommendations, management actions and linkages between these two workshop will be further deliberated during this APFIC 29<sup>th</sup> Session.

As with most countries in the Asia-Pacific, aquaculture is being actively developed to meet the growing demand for fish and to ensure food security. However, the development of aquaculture is currently

constrained by environmental issues and diseases. This sector has been the focus of continuing public exposure and debate related to negative environmental and social impacts. Therefore, delegates here will discuss openly, critically debate and decide on the more specific areas of work for APFIC for the next two years which is timely and important for sustainable aquaculture development in the Asia-Pacific region.

In the recently launched Ninth Malaysian Economic Development Plan by the Rt. Honourable Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister of Malaysia, the agriculture and food sectors have been identified as the third engine of growth. An area of serious concern to the government is the increasing negative trade balance in food from a deficit of RM1 billion in 1990 to about RM6.6 billion in 2004 and is projected to increase substantially to about RM10.9 billion by the year 2010. Of all the agriculture subsectors, the fisheries sector is expected to play a significant role to correct this imbalance through increasing supply and generating higher export earning.

The bulk of the fish production will be from the aquaculture subsector. By 2010, production target for fish is 2.071 million metric tonnes. A total of 662,000 metric tonnes of fish is targeted from the aquaculture subsector and 1.409 million metric tonnes from the inshore and deep sea fisheries. Increasing fish production from the marine capture fisheries and aquaculture as well as exports of fish and fish products can be achieved by improving productivity, product competitiveness and enhancing product quality and value chain.

Recent concern on health and environment aspects of fish production and fish trade has resulted in stringent standards and regulations set by developed nations so as to ensure quality and safety of fish imports. These standards include SPS, HACCP, labelling for origin/certificate of origin, traceability, trade in endangered species and zero tolerance to certain veterinary drugs. These issues were recently discussed in the FAO Sub-Committee on Fish Trade. I sincerely hope the delegates from the Asia-Pacific region would deliberate on these issues and make recommendations to assist developing countries in fulfilling these requirements so that products from the Asia-Pacific region will gain greater consumer confidence and accessibility to foreign market.

It is my sincere hope that the Twenty-ninth Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission held in Kuala Lumpur for the next three days will be a fruitful meeting, finalizing an agreed two-year work plan for the sustainability of the fisheries and aquaculture in the Asia-Pacific region.

I hope that the Distinguished Delegates and observers from the Asia-Pacific region will enjoy their short sojourn in Malaysia. In spite of the arduous task that lies ahead of you in the next few days, I hope all of you will be able to find time to see more of Malaysia especially Kuala Lumpur so that you can see for yourselves the way of life, the culture and aspirations of the various races that go to make up this multi-racial nation of ours. I hope that when you leave our shores, you will bring back with you fond memories of your stay in this country.

Before I end my speech, I would like to congratulate the Department of Fisheries Malaysia, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC) for the successful organization of the 29<sup>th</sup> Session of the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission.

On this note, and in the name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful, I take great pleasure in declaring the "Twenty-ninth Session of the Asia Pacific Fishery Commission" open.

I wish all of you a very fruitful and rewarding deliberations.

Thank you.

## APFIC WORK PLAN FOR 2006-2008 AND 2008-2010

### 2006-2008

March 2007	FAO/COFI Session (and RFB meeting)
<b>June 2007</b>	APFIC Regional Consultative workshop on Fish Trade and Standards
<b>September 2007</b>	APFIC Regional Consultative Workshop Managing fishing capacity
<b>October 2007</b>	71 <sup>st</sup> APFIC Executive Committee Session
May 2008	FAO/COFI Sub-Committee on Trade
<b>May 2008</b>	External APFIC review
<b>Early August 2008</b>	Second Regional Consultative Forum Meeting and 30 <sup>th</sup> Session of APFIC
September 2008	FAO/COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture

### 2008-2010

(Assuming endorsement of 30<sup>th</sup> Session of APFIC – based on the comprehensive review)

February/March 2009	COFI Session (and RFB meeting)
<b>May 2009</b>	Regional Consultative workshop
<b>September 2009</b>	Regional Consultative workshop
<b>October 2009</b>	72 <sup>nd</sup> APFIC Executive Committee Session
May 2010	FAO/COFI Sub-Committee on Trade
<b>August 2010</b>	Third Regional Consultative Forum Meeting and 31 <sup>st</sup> Session of APFIC
September 2010	FAO/COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture