

Original article

## Current supporting activities and the future issues in the Southeast Asia region by Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center

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### Introduction

The Southeast Asian region is the one of the most abundant fishery areas which has produced various kinds of fishery products distributed worldwide. Southeast Asia Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), which was established in 1967 to promote sustainable fisheries in the Southeast Asia joined by the ten Southeast Asian countries and Japan as Member Countries, has developed fisheries technologies that were disseminated to fishing communities in the region. SEAFDEC has an international cooperation with Japan Trust Fund (JTF) in conducting various projects under four components in 2017 (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Components and main projects conducted by SEAFDEC supported by JTF in 2017

Components	Main projects
1. Enhancing the capability for sustainable utilization of fisheries resources	- Harmonization of fishery statistics - Combating IUU fishing
2. Strengthening the promotion of sustainable fisheries	- Offshore fisheries resources exploration - Improving postharvest technology - Comparative studies for management of purse seine fisheries - Optimizing energy use and improving safety in fishing activities
3. Promotion of sustainable aquaculture and resources enhancement in Southeast Asia	- Reinforcement of fish health management and environment friendly sustainable utilization and management of aquaculture resources - Research for enhancement of sustainable utilization and management of sharks and rays - Promotion of sustainable fisheries resources enhancement measures in critical habitats/fishing grounds
4. Promotion of sustainable development in inland fisheries	- Promotion of responsible utilization of inland fisheries

Source: 49<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council.

The Project “Promotion of sustainable fisheries resources enhancement measures in critical habitats/fishing grounds,” conducted by SEAFDEC/Training Department is one of the priority projects as listed in the Table 1. The Project, considering the characteristics of the target sites, introduces the appropriate resource enhancement tools (*i.e.* voluntary management rules) and facilities (*i.e.* artificial reefs and hatcheries) with capacity building of fishers and local government staff. As one of main activities of the Project, the “Study on Enhancement of Sustainable Management of the Blue Swimming Crab Fisheries” was commenced in July 2017.

### Study on Enhancement of the Sustainable Management of the Blue Swimming Crab Fisheries in Cambodia

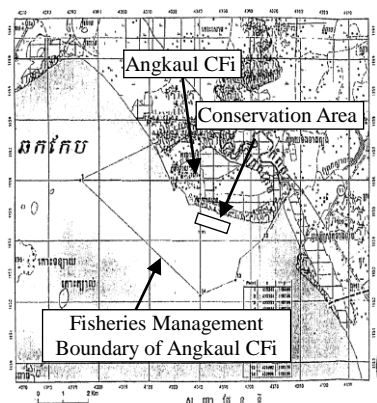
#### (1) Background

The blue swimming crab is a high value species that has been promoted in the coastal areas of Cambodia. The blue swimming crab fisheries have contributed to the increase of income of fishing communities. However, the rising trends have caused some problems such as illegal fishing, overfishing, *etc.*, which concerned public sectors that those problems could trigger depletion of the species. Consequently, SEAFDEC launched the “Study on Enhancement of the Sustainable Management of the Blue Swimming Crab Fisheries” for the period 2017–2019 to support Cambodia in the sustainable management of the blue swimming crab fisheries. In this study, Angkaul in Kep Province was selected as the study site (Fig. 1) where a Community Fisheries (CFi) organization exists and involves in blue swimming crab fisheries. Angkaul CFi is supported by several organizations; however, it has not formulated

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sustainable management scheme. Hence, this study puts priority on the “sustainability” of crab fisheries.



**Fig. 1.** Map of Angkaul CFi.

## (2) Baseline survey and future strategy

The field surveys and meetings conducted by SEAFDEC, Government of Cambodia, Kep Province, and Angkaul CFi identified the problems, major causes, and measures as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Problems, major causes, and measures of the blue swimming crab fisheries experienced by Angkaul CFi

Problems	Major Causes	Measures
Illegal fishing	- Low recognition of the fishers toward the regulations - Weak surveillance and implementation of regulation by the authority	- Implementation of regulations by the public sector and volunteers - Dissemination and awareness-raising of the regulations to the fishers - Capacity building of the provincial staff - Surveillance of fisheries activities and conservation areas
Diminishing size of crab and depletion of crab	- Increase of catch amount and population of fishers - Illegal fishing - Weak crab propagation scheme such as crab bank, rules on closed areas and seasons	- Installation of the sustainable crab bank scheme including rebuilding on-land hatchery and releasing the juvenile crabs to the conservation areas - Input of the interest benefit into the activities above from the micro financing scheme
Low benefit from fishing of local fishers	- High interest rate of private loans	- Foundation of sustainable micro finance scheme for fishers by the public sector

*Source:* Interview and regional meetings with local fishers and government staff conducted by SEAFDEC in 2017.

This study formulates a micro financing scheme which lends funds to the local fishers with low interest rate to pay for their fishing activities and to manage the crab bank scheme using the interest collected from the fishers to ensure “sustainable management.”

## (3) Results

It is the first time for Cambodia to formulate a

sustainable fisheries management scheme for the blue swimming crab fisheries with the partnership between Kep Province and Angkaul CFi. SEAFDEC will put forward this study to formulate the sustainable management scheme eliminating any obstacles and the foundation of financing service for the fishers by the public sector.

## Way forward

SEAFDEC is encountering more issues (Table 3) in addition to the serious concerns mentioned above. SEAFDEC is expected to deal with these issues in cooperation with Member Countries.

**Table 3.** Newly emerging or still serious main issues on ASEAN Regions

Main issues	Details
1.To establish fisheries regulation through the countermeasures against IUU Fishing	-To continue the development and dissemination of countermeasures against IUU fishing such as electronic ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme (eACDS) and Regional Fishing Vessels Record (RFVR) and to introduce fisheries management measures to implement the FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) -To enhance the management scheme of inland fisheries
2.To develop and disseminate postharvest technologies and methodologies to ensure safe and trusted fish products to consumers	-To develop and disseminate ASEAN traceability scheme and ASEAN eco-labeling -To disseminate technologies and methodologies to enhance the quality and competitiveness of high-valued fisheries products
3.To enhance conservation and management of commercially-exploited aquatic resources	-To enhance resource management of the stock of sharks and rays species, and other important marine resources for sustainable utilization and to enhance capacity to compile fisheries data to assess the stock status of eel species in timely manner and disseminate measures for the sustainable utilization -To develop and disseminate effective aquaculture technologies for the farmers
4.To enhance healthy ecosystem and improve the livelihood of fisheries communities	-To strengthen small-scale fisheries and aquaculture through the dissemination and development of concerned methodologies -To manage the critical nursery and fishing grounds based on scientific and local knowledge

*Source:* 49<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council.

## References

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