



**A Conference for Providing Knowledge on Status of Fisheries and Related New Laws
for Small Scale Fishers in the Andaman Sea Coast
(REBYC-II CTI; GCP/RAS/269/GFF)**

**28-30 August 2016
Erawan Phang-Nga Hotel**

Report by

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Summary

As the project “Strategies for trawl fisheries by-catch management” (REBYC-II CTI; GCP/RAS/269/GFF) was concluding, it was found necessary that more primary stakeholder consultations need to be organised to disseminate results of the project and the knowledge about the status of small scale fisheries. The new laws concerning to small scale fishers, especially Royal Fisheries Ordinance 2559 (2015) which is concerned to small scale fisheries and fishers was to be disseminated. So for the benefit of the fishers and other stakeholders from the Andaman Sea side of Thailand, this conference was organized at Erawan Phang-Nga Hotel on 28-30 August 2016. This conference was specifically targeted at small scale fishers and the 72 participants comprised of small scale fishers, Government officials, experts, and secretariat staff.

On the Gulf of Thailand the first site of the project was in Prachuab Kiri Khan and Chumphon provinces where the enlarged mesh size codend for trawl fisheries was tried out and implemented. The second site was in Trat Province, where the management measures for closed area and closed season were established to protect fish larvae and spawners. In Trat Province, DOF had conducted survey for fish larvae and spawner distribution in Ao Trat. In Prachuab Kiri Khan – Chumphon provinces, CMDEC had conducted survey of trawl fisheries baseline, present trawl fisheries status, experiment to enlarge codend mesh for trawlers as well as socio-economic study of fishers along the sea coast of Prachuab Kiri Khan – Chumphon provinces.

The Royal Fisheries Ordinance B.E.2558 (2015) has focused specifications for small scale fishers. The zonations for fishing, gear specifications and prohibited gears in different sections were described. The importance of the national committee, provincial committee and local small scale fisheries committee were described.

Regarding the status of fisheries, it could be concluded that the internal problems were a) decreasing trend of the resources and environment deterioration, b) less fishing ground and limited catches, c) too many fishing boats, gears and diversification, d) poor integration and management among agencies e.g. boat license is under Harbor Department and fishing boat and gear license is under the Department of Fisheries, e) conflict on fishing ground between large scale and small scale fisheries. The external requirements were a) combating IUU fishing is serious issue for Thailand also to address the EU requirement, b) norms of IOTC for tuna catch quota, WCPFC, ILO for labor issues etc.

The representations from the people were mainly on the need of widely publicizing the various fisheries management measures and the changes. Alternate livelihoods options for those without licenses or where licenses are delayed were important. There is need of local specific mesh and gear regulations.

1. Background to REBYC-II CTI Project

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Department of Fisheries (DOF), Thailand have signed the Letter of Agreement (LOA) for the execution of the GEF supported project “Strategies for trawl fisheries by-catch management” (REBYC-II CTI; GCP/RAS/269/GFF). In Thailand the Department of Fisheries, Marine Fisheries Research and Development Division implements the project at two sites. Prachuab Kiri Khan and Chumphon is the first site where the enlarged mesh size codend for trawl fisheries was implemented. The Central Gulf Marine Fisheries Research and Development Center (CMDEC) located in Chumphon took the lead in the research on trawl fisheries and enlarged codend mesh size experiments. The second site is in Trat Province, where the management measures for closed area and closed season were established to protect fish larvae and spawners. The Eastern Marine Fisheries Research and Development (EMDEC) located in Rayong province took the lead for research works.

The activities in the two project sites have been completed. The Central Marine Fisheries Research and Development Center which took the lead in the Prachuab Kiri Khan and Chumphon provinces activities, has finished their experiments on the enlarged mesh size of codend 4.0 cm for otter board and pair trawlers, and proposed to use 4.0 cm mesh for otter board and pair trawlers. The Eastern Marine Fisheries Research and Development Center, was responsible for the area and season closure in Ao Trat, Trat province. Both project sites have held several local consultation meetings to consult with the local fishers and private sectors to conduct experiments and surveys for fish larvae. The stakeholders and private sectors agreed for the project to be carried out. Results of the research and surveys also have been shared with the local stakeholders and private sectors. The results were also shared with High Senior Officials in the Advisory Committee Meeting and Conservation Committee Meeting several times.

The final outputs were the Government announcement to use 5.0 cm of codend mesh size for otter board trawlers and pair trawlers by the Command Center for Combating Illegal Fishing of the Government. Afterwards, the Command Center for Combating Illegal Fishing of the Government has changed the mesh size measure to be 4.0 cm. The Area and Season Closure has been proposed through the Advisory Committee and Conservation Committee of the project. Furthermore, the DOF has sent back the area and season closure management to the provincial committee to issue the measure. The Provincial Committee agreed to have resource management and then formulated 5 nm area from shore to be prohibited for all kinds of fishing gear, in the project site in Ao Trat. The permanent closed area management (5 nm from shoreline) will be approved by the Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives Ministry soon.

In this connection, the Marine Fisheries Research and Development Division under the DOF would like to provide information on and promote the results of the project (REBYC-II CTI; GCP/RAS/269/GFF) in both project sites, make public the knowledge about present fisheries situation, the New Fisheries Act and need of practical implementation of fisheries management corresponding to global situation. The DOF desires that the wider small scale fishers in the Andaman Sea Coast which consist of six provinces (Ranong, Phang-Nga, Trang, Krabi, Phuket and Satul provinces) attain and gain more knowledge about results of the project, small scale fisheries status and New Laws concerning to small scale fishers.

This conference was organized at Erawan Phang-Nga Hotel on 28-30 August 2016. This conference was specifically targeted at small scale fishers and the 72 participants comprised small scale fishers (51), Government officials (12), experts (4) and secretariat staff (5).

Specific Objectives of the REBYC-II CTI Project in Thailand under the 3rd LOA

1. Provide knowledge for small scale fishers about the results of the projects (REBYC-II CTI; GCP/RAS/269/GFF). Mesh size enlargement for trawlers and Permanent Area Closure outputs,
2. Publicize the knowledge on current status of small scale fisheries among small scale fishers,
3. Provide knowledge for small scale fishers about Royal Fisheries Ordinance 2559 (2015) which is concerned to small scale fisheries and fishers.

2. Expected Outputs:

- 1) Small scale fishers in the Andaman Sea coast know about the results of the project (REBYC-II CTI; GCP/RAS/269/GFF).
- 2) Small scale fishers in the Andaman Sea coast know about the present small scale fisheries status,
- 3) Small scale fishers in the Andaman Sea coast know about Royal Fisheries Ordinance 2559 (2015) related to small scale fisheries and fishers
- 4) Recommendation from small scale fishers to DOF.

3. Summary of the Conference for Fisheries and New Laws Knowledge Provision for Small Scale Fishers in the Andaman Sea Coast

The conference was presided and welcomed by the Deputy Governor of Phang-Nga Province, Mr. Sakol Chantararat. Further the conference discussed on four areas as follows:

3.1 Results of the Project

Mr. Suchart Sangchan, the Thailand National Project Coordinator of the Project REBYC-II CTI; GCP/RAS/269/GFF, briefed the meeting on the results of the project:

In Trat province, DOF had conducted survey for fish larvae and spawner distribution in Ao Trat. The surveys included fisheries baseline and present fisheries status, and socio-economic status of fishers around Ao Trat.

In Prachup Kiri Khan – Chumphon provinces, CMDEC had conducted survey of trawl fisheries baseline, present trawl fisheries status, experiment to enlarge codend mesh for trawlers as well as socio-economic study of fishers along the sea coast of Prachaup Kiri Khan – Chumphon provinces.

Objectives of the project are to reduce juvenile and small sized economic species from otter board and pair trawls as well as to reduce other by-catch such as sea turtle, marine mammals, protected sea grass etc. The management for trawl fisheries and by-catch is a major target. The approach being taken up is the Ecosystem Approach on Fisheries Management, which also covers human resource development, healthy habitats, socioeconomic of fishers and environment degradation. Area and Season closure was also implemented to conserve and preserve small sized economic fish, spawners and the ecosystem at large.

3.2 Royal Fisheries Ordinance B.E.2558 (2015)

Mr. Vichit Chaisaree, Head of Marine Fisheries Enforcement Unit, Administrative and Management Division, DOF, presented new laws and regulations concerned to small scale fishers. The definition for small scale fisheries are: to be fishing boat owner, household operators of 3-5 persons, few number of fishing gear types catching target fish by season, low power engine, small auxiliary gear, shorter fishing time, small space for fishing etc.

In the Royal Fisheries Ordinance B.E.2558 (2015) the specification of small scale fisheries in the Section 5, means fishing in the coastal area with or without fishing boat and not doing commercial fishing.

Coastal Fishers are fishing in the original zone from 1.5 nm to 3 nm or more than 3 nm but less than 12 nm. Notification announcement of the Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives Ministry with fishing zone map would be attached.

Commercial Fisheries means fishing by fishing boat capacity more than 10 gross ton or fishing boat horse power more than 280 hp.

Fisheries means fishing, freshwater fish culture and aquaculture, conservation of fisheries resources, fish processing and product and other means of fisheries.

Fishing gear means mechanic, utensil, equipment, composition, weapon, pole, which are used to fish.

Other definition for fishing was also described to the small scale fishers in the meeting, e.g. mesh size for trap, number of octopus trap, anchovy net, short-necked clam dredge etc.

Other points described about Royal Fisheries Ordinance B.E.2558 (2015) were:

1) In the Government Gazette 13 November 2015, effective on 14 November 2015, there are 11 issues in 176 sections.

One issue of these is cancelation the Fisheries Acts 2015 (Fisheries Acts 1947 has been cancelled before).The section wise details are as follows

Section 1-7 about general concept

Section 8-11 about Fisheries management

Section 12-29 about National Fisheries Committee and Provincial Fisheries Committee

Section 30-46 about Fisheries Outsidess Thai Water

Section 47-54 about Natural Conservation Committee and Management

Section 55-72 about Promotion of Fish culture

Section 73-77 about Monitoring, Control and Surveillance, Traceability

Section 80-97 about Fish sanitation, Fisheries product

Section 98-100 about Fisheries officials

Section 110 about Administrative measures

Section 121-170 about Penalties

Section 171-176 about Transitional provisions, Acting Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives being active.

2) *Local Small Scale Fisheries Committee, meaning:*

Fishers who reside in the area of village, Tambol, Amphoe, Province are taking up fisheries activities or fisheries objectives to help each other and promote progressive activity. The requirements for *Local Small Scale Fisheries Committee* are:

- a. To be a cooperation group or organization.
- b. At least 7 members.
- c. The objectives are to promote fishing at local area and fish culture including coastal fisheries, offshore fisheries, freshwater fisheries, freshwater culture and other aquaculture, fish processing and products.
- d. Registration by request to the local fisheries provincial officials, registration needs 3 members to sign the request. Needed documents are copy of identification card, copy of housing registration, copy of certificate of cooperation group, history in brief (establishment, objectives, and regularity, list of members and list of the Administrative members) of the cooperation.
- e. To Register to DOF within 30 days after the Royal Fisheries Ordinance B.E.2558 (2015) become effective. Now the date has been extended, and no dead line.
- f. DOF has to promote *Local Small Scale Fisheries Committees* as said in the Section 25 and to promote participation in policy making, advice knowledge provision etc.

3. *Fisheries Provincial Committee, consist of*

- a. The Provincial Governor who by position is the President of the Committee.
- b. Members are 10 representatives from Natural Resource Ministry, Harbor Department, Provincial Attorney, Provincial Commerce, Amphoe, Tambol, Agricultural Council, Navy and Provincial Fisheries official as a secretary.
- c. The governor will assign 13 professional members divided into local fisheries professional in 5 lines and selected 3 members from Fisheries and Natural Resource and environment. Two years period is the term for a member.
- d. The responsibility of the Committee is stipulated in the Section 28 (propose recommendation to promote career, preserve and conserve natural resources, rehabilitation, and usage of the resource, provide message from the Provincial Fisheries Committee to the National Fisheries Committee). The proposal will be implemented to formulate policy for fisheries in Thai waters, Section 19(1).
- e. Proposal to promote or resolve problems via ministry, committee, Director General to issue Notification by Section 56, 71 and 77 in the Government Gazette. Limiting area for conservation of the resources (Section 56), fisheries zones for coastal and freshwater areas, Notification to prohibit some kinds of fishing gear, incidental catch, stationary gear (Section 71), and aquaculture fisheries (Section 77).

3.3 Marine Fisheries Status in the Andaman Sea

Mr. Pirochana Saikieng, Marine Fisheries Consultant of DOF, presented that in the year 2009 the fishing gear used in the Southeast Asian Region comprised of trawlers about 50%, the rest being purse seine and gillnet. The catches in the region was about 20% of the world catches, Indonesia was the highest producer. The production from Thailand decreased continuously in recent years. The fishing grounds were reduced due to lesser fishing cooperation among neighboring countries. In 2016, the number of registered fishing boats was 11,217, of which trawlers were about 34%. Fishing outside Thai waters is poorly organized, moreover some illegal fishing occurs causing less fishing in the outside Thai waters.

It could be concluded that the internal problems were a) decreasing trend of the resources and environment deterioration, b) less fishing ground and limited catches, c) too many fishing boats, gear and diversification, d) poor integration and management among agencies e.g. boat license is under Harbor Department and fishing boat and gear license is under the Department of Fisheries, e) conflict on fishing ground between large scale and small scale fisheries.

The external requirements were a) combating IUU fishing is serious issue for Thailand also to address the EU requirement, b) norms of IOTC for tuna catch quota, WCPFC, ILO for labor issues etc.

As a next step for Fisheries Management of Thailand, the Department of Fisheries will improve effective fisheries management, promote participatory approach and cooperation among government agencies, private sectors, large and small scale fishers in policy making, develop management scheme for resources rebuilding and enhancement, and increase capacity in VMS and MCS systems.

4. Inputs and Recommendations from Fishers to DOF

Recommendations from participants (small scale fishers) which were divided into 5 groups were as follows:

Recommendations from Group 1 (Phuket):

- 1) They accepted for 3 nm from shoreline no fishing zone,
- 2) They accepted for using mesh size of 2.5 inch at the bottom side of crab net,
- 3) Limiting number and mesh size (2.7 cm) for shallow water bamboo stake trap,
- 4) Management process and enforcement should be clear. Aquaculture could be developed as an alternative fishing career,
- 5) Publication of fishing regulations and announcement should be conducted frequently.

Recommendations from Group 2 (Phang-Nga and Phuket):

- 1) Coastal area should be 12 nm,
- 2) Area for conservation should be well defined,
- 3) Limit number of small scale fishing gear e.g. intrusive crab trap should be less than 1,500 in numbers,
- 4) Request for boat registration for Thailand displaced people,
- 5) Harbor Department and DOF should find alternative options for those who could not have fishing license on time,
- 6) DOF should continue to provide information and publicize fisheries and laws knowledge to small scale fishers.

Recommendations from Group 3 (Krabi):

- 1) Intermission for licensing causing discontinuity in boat license from Harbor Department. This causes difficulty to fishers in case they want to continue their licenses for boat and gear issued from DOF,
- 2) The conflict between users of shallow bamboo stake trap and other small fishing gear, requesting to solve the problem,
- 3) Crab trap with pole using small mesh size and fishing in the mangrove area should be managed,
- 4) Round scad purse seine using 2.5-2.8 cm catching small sized Indo-Pacific mackerel (*Rastrelliger spp.*) should be managed,
- 5) Request DOF to collaborate with Harbor Department to reduce boat license fee from 800-900 Baht to a lesser amount,
- 6) If DOF open for registration, the small scale can fish outside 3 nm or not (Section 34),
- 7) Problems: bird net collection made the small scale fishing boat difficult to land at islands; request has been made for reducing controlling cement contamination of waters from cement containers which affect abundance of the fisheries resources. Concerned government agencies should solve the problem by checking the water quality.

Recommendations from Group 4 (Trang):

- 1) Request to expand coastal area to be 5.7 km (3nm),
- 2) Request to strictly enforce ban for crab trap using bottom mesh size less than 2.5 inch.

Recommendations from Group 5 (Satul):

- 1) Request to increase bottom mesh size of crab trap to 3.5 inch,
- 2) They accepted for 3 nm from shoreline,
- 3) DOF should resolve conflict between large and small scale fishers,
- 4) DOF should announce for some changes of existing law and regulation,
- 5) Request DOF to investigate at Tan Yong Po district because shellfish in this area were dying and effect to fisher career.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, the stake holders were informed of following details: in the Gulf of Thailand, the first site of the project was in Prachuab Kiri Khan and Chumphon provinces where the enlarged mesh size codend for trawl fisheries was tried out and implemented. The second site was in Trat Province, where the management measures for closed area and closed season were established to protect fish larvae and spawners. In Trat Province, DOF had conducted survey for fish larvae and spawner distribution in Ao Trat. In Prachuab Kiri Khan – Chumphon provinces, CMDEC had conducted survey of trawl fisheries baseline, present trawl fisheries status, experiment to enlarge codend mesh for trawlers as well as socio-economic study of fishers along the sea coast of Prachuab Kiri Khan – Chumphon provinces.

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1. Activities pictures



Registration



Deputy Governor of Phang-Nga Province presiding the conference, Mr. Sakol Chantarot.



The conference moment



Participants



Group discussion



Group discussion



Law and regulation presentation



Marine Small scale fisheries in the Andaman Sea

Agenda
A Conference for Fisheries and New Laws Knowledge Provision
for Small Scale Fishers in the Andaman Sea Coast
(REBYC-II CTI; GCP/RAS/269/GFF)

Erawan Hotel in Phang-Nga Province
28-30 August 2016

28 August 2016

16.00-18.30 hr Registration at hotel

29 August 2016

08:00-09:00 hr Registration

09:00-09:30 hr Opening of the meeting (Deputy Governor of Phang-Nga Province)

09:30-09:50 hr Background of the project briefly, fisheries and social economic status in Prachuab Kiri Khan, Chumphon Province

09:50-10:10 hr Enlarge the codend mesh size of trawl fisheries in focus

10:10-10:25 hr Refreshment

10:25-10:45 hr Fisheries and social economic status in Trat Province

10:45-11:15 hr Closed area and closed season in focus in Ao Trat

11:15-12:15 hr New Fisheries Acts and Law and legal provisions related to small scale fisheries

12:15-13:15 hr Lunch

13:15-14:45 hr Small scale fisheries status in the Andaman Sea

14:45-15:00 hr Refreshment

15:00-15:45 hr Group discussion

15:45-16:15 hr Open discussion

16:15-16:00 hr Closure of the meeting (Mr. Suchart Sangchan)

30 August 2016

Travelling back home