Stakeholder Consultation Meeting in Trat province on

Area and Season Closure Management

"REBYC-II CTI; GCP /RAS/269/GFF"
30November 2015, Baan Poo Spa and Resort

Report by
Dr. Mala Supongpan, Mr. PiyachokSinananandand Mrs. TiwaratSinananand

1. Background to REBYC-II CTI Project

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations ("FAO") and the Department of Fisheries, Thailand has signed a 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). Thailand by the Department of Fisheries. The Marine Fisheries Research and Development Bureau are implementing the project in two areas of the Gulf of Thailand. Prachuab Kiri Khan and Chumphon is the first site and the focus of the work is on the enlargement of codend mesh sizes for trawlers. The Central Gulf Marine Fisheries Research and Development Center (CMDEC), located in Chumphon is taking the lead research role for these experiments. The second site is in Trat province, where management measures for closed areas and closed seasons are being established to protect fish larvae and spawners. The Eastern Marine Fisheries Research and Development (EMDEC), located in Rayong province is leading this works

In this connection, the Division of the Marine Fisheries Research and Development would like to consult fishers and fishing gear owners on the likely impact on social and economic issues if management measuresare implementedin AoTrat. At the same time the DOF will gather ideas, problems and assess stakeholder willingness to cooperate inarea and season closures for fisheries management to ensurea balanced approach to sustainable development for all

2. Summary of Stakeholder Consultation Meeting in Trat province

The Objectives of the Consultation Meeting were as follows:

- To discuss the impact of implementing the Area and Season Closures in AoTrat,
- To agree which AoTratareas and seasons the fishery shall be closed,

- To agree what types of fishing gear should be prohibited.

The 140 participants consisted of fishers, representative of fisheries societies, fisher groups, fish organizations in Trat, The Trat local administration, experts and government officials from DOF, MONRE, and observers.

Mr. WuthichaiWangkahard, the Director of Eastern Marine Fisheries Research and Development Center (Rayong) presided over the meeting.

Mrs. PraulaiNootmorn, the Director of Research and Technology Institute explained the National Policy for the Marine Fisheries Management Plan (**FMP**) 2015 – 2019. Under the 11th Plan forSocial and Economic Development of Thailand, the DOF has developed and re-formulated policies to manage fisheries in line with international arrangements, for both inshore and offshore Thai waters.

The FMP has the following objectives:

Objective 1: Reducing fishing capacity and fishing effort;
Target: Reduction of fishing capacity and effort within 3 years, especially commercial vessels.

- Demersal fishing effort reduced by 40% in the GOT and 10% in the Andaman Sea.
- Pelagic fishing effort reduced by 30% in the GOT and 20% in the Andaman Sea.

Objective 2: Rebuilding fish resources through artificial reefs and restocking programs;
Target: Increase the number of effective artificial reefs by at least 10 sites per year and increase community stock enhancement projects by al least 10 community projects per year.

Objective 3: Minimizing IUU fishing through effective MCS.
Target: Reduce the level of IUU fishing to a level that can be controlled through regular MCS arrangements.

Objective 4: Reducing the catch of juveniles of the larger commercial species
Target: Reduce the number of juveniles landed to 50% of current levels within 5 years.

Objective 5: Resolving conflicts between small-scale and large-scale fishers.
Target: Reduce the incidence of conflicts to a manageable level in all Provinces.

Objective 6: Restoring and maintaining critical habitats.
Target: Protection and rehabilitation of an additional 4,000 Rai[1]of mangrove by 2019.

Objective 7: Improving fisheries data and information.
Target: Improve data collection and information collection and dissemination systems to a level that can be used to monitor the performance of this FMP, within 2 years.

Objective 8: Strengthening fisheries management capacity.
Target: An effective and efficient fisheries management capacity within 5 years.

[1] 1 Rai = 1600 m2

Key principles of the Fisheries Management Plan (FMP)

1. Good governance that facilitates the setting of rules and regulations and provides adequate resources and arrangements for compliance and enforcement;
2. Cooperation and coordination both vertically across different levels of government and society and horizontally across agencies and sectors;
3. Adaptive management that embraces change through learning and adapting; and
4. Adoption of the Precautionary Approach that does not delay action because of lack of information and manages cautiously when uncertainty exists (e.g. uncertainty in the MSY estimate).

This session was followed by **Mr. SuchartSangchan**, the Director of Andaman Sea Fisheries Research and Development Centerpresentinga background to the project "REBYC-II CTI; GCP /RAS/269/GFF" so that participants could understand the work being done under this GEF and DOF co-funding project.

An Open discussion session was then, chaired by Associated Professor Dr. KungwanChantrachote (Consultant of Fisheries Department, KU) involving presentations by Mr. PavarotNoranarttragoon, Dr. SirisudaJumnongsong; Mr. ThanasSrikoom, Miss ChalatipChanchompooand Mr. PiyachokSinanan.

Mr. Pavarotsummarised the commercial fisheries situation around Trat areas relating to the number of fishing boats, catch data and results from the research that indicate:

- Overfishing of pelagic and demersal fish,
- High capture level of juveniles of commercially important species;
- Many commercial fish being caught below their spawning sizes.

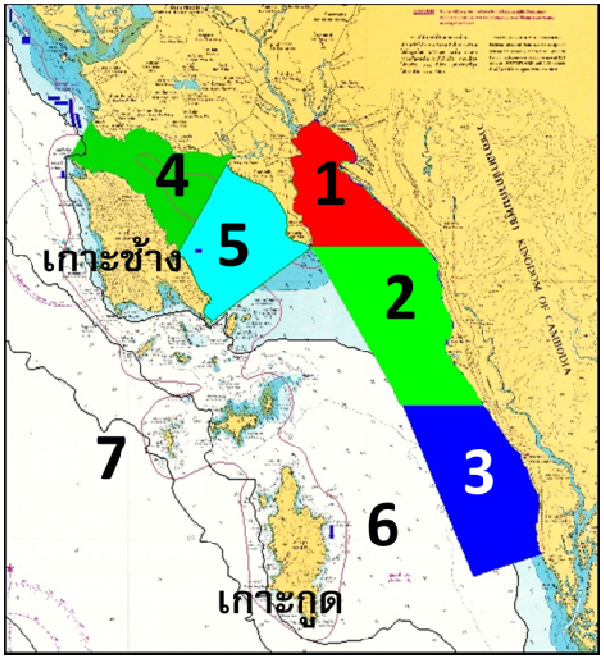
Mr. Pavarot recommended the following measures:
Reducing of the fishing effort should be effectively enforced, e.g. by reducingthe number of fishing boats, reducingthe number of fishing days and closing fishing for a period of time in some areas. It was also important to enlarge codend mesh size for trawlers to reduce the small size of fish caught. In the short term, these measures would probably result in a reduction in fish catches and incomes.

Mr.Thanas pointed out the catches from small scale fisheries were mainly Indo-Pacific mackerel, swimming crab, shrimp, and bigfin reef squid where the fishing ground was around Koh Chang and KohKuit. In 2015, the major fishing gear used for Indo-Pacific mackerel was the gillnet. The average catch rate was 50.2 kg/trip. Gillnet fishing for crab had a catch rate of 4.6 kg/trip; Flexible crab trapshad a catch rate of 6.2 kg/trip; and shrimp trammel nets had a catch rate of 2.5 kg/trip.

Miss Chalatip explained that there were several rare species found in Trat province, especially dolphin. In 2014, only 265 individuals of three species were found. In 2015, only 171 individuals were found. They were seen in AoTrat coastal areas for feeding on small mackerel and squid.

The mortality of dolphin was found by natural death and through mortality by fishing gear, predation and eating junk. Now the fisheries communities havebecome more aware ofthese endangered species and are establishing a network to protect the dolphin and to use them as a tourism attraction.

Dr. Sirisuda presented the main findings from an EMDEC social economic study in the Eastern Gulf involving 233 fishing households. The main fishing gears used by small-scale households were Shrimp gillnets, Crab gillnets and Crab traps. Medium and large-scale fishing households were involved in push-netting, trawling or purse seining. The average number of fishing days per month was 19 and fishing took place for 11 months of the year. Generally, perceptions of fisheries management were low as was understanding of the fisheries law and other legal issues. Households knew about 45-46% of the key law and legal issues and 35-43% of their practices could be considered legal. Most small-scale fishers did not register as a community group. Recommendations from the study included the promotion of alternative livelihoods for suitable age groups; and fisher participation in fisheries management should be promoted and the regular exchange of data and information encouraged. The zoning of AoTrat and the options for the closure were discussed.



Upper island = Koh Chang (**เกาะช้าง**), lower island = KohKuit (**เกาะกูด**)

The options for closing AoTratwere as follows:

- Permanent- No fishing in area 1, 2 & 3;
- Seasonal fishing in area 1, 2 & 3;
- Permanent No fishing in area 1 &2, to protect Indo-Pacific mackerel and rare species including dolphin, as well as mangrove areas,
- Seasonal fishing in areas 1 & 2,alternating betweenarea 1 & area 2,
- Seasonal, (May-October), limitations on fishing gear use in area 2 & 3 to protect Indo-Pacific mackerel, swimming crab and short-necked clam,
- Seasonal No fishing during spawning season, (February-May) in area 3 to protect Indo-Pacific mackerel,

- Seasonal (March-May), prohibition on fishing gearmesh sizes less than 4.5 cm for catching Indo-Pacific mackerel.

In addition to these options,the following supporting actions were recommended:

- Promotion of dolphin watching ecotourism in Trat;
- Carry out campaign to discourage people from fishingfor small-sized commercial fish;
- Protect some areas for turtles to lay eggs;
- Protect some areas of sea grass;
- Promote crab banks;
- Promote squid eggs banks;
- Increase area of mussel culture in the permitted areas.

Mr. Piyachok presented the current fisheries situation in Trat and proposed management measures to suit the present situation. It can be concluded that the damage to fisheries and the environment in AoTrat has occurred and recently there have been some fisheries management measures introduced includingthe permanent closure ofAoTrat to fishing within 3 km of the shoreline by trawlers and push netters. In some areas, fishing is banned for half a year or throughout the year. No light luring purse seine fishing is permitted and no cast net and lift net fishing is permitted for anchovy.

Characteristics of the fisheries and ecology of AoTrat.

- AoTrat is an area of abundant natural resources area and has potential for fisheries development and tourism;
- Mangrove areas are still plentiful;
- Sea grass beds support several species e.g. shrimps, molluscs and fish;
- Coral areas, rich in biodiversityare located in the Eastern area of the Gulf. They are taken care of by communitieswho can diversify their livelihoods through involvement in tourism;
- Large habitat areas exist for rare and endangered species e.g. dolphin and turtle.
- Local communities are positive about their participation and cooperation in fisheries and ecological management e.g. In TambolLamgrad, where they managed short neck clam from their own resources; and at AmphoeKlongYai where they manage an artificial reef
- Strong private sector, fisheries communities cooperated willingly with the government agencies involved in fisheries and ecological management.

Recent Problems

- Catch rate has decreased. Data from research vessel surveys indicated that in the year 1982, the catch rate was 41 kg/hrand the 2009 catch rate had dropped to 23.70 kg/hr;
- Most of the fish caught were small-sized and non-economic species;
- The catch rate from trawling within 3-5 km from the shoreline,was higher in Tratthan in Chantaburi and Rayong. The catch composed of true trash fish that wereof minor economic value;
- Management measures from the Government have not been effective output and resources are still decreasing;
- Rare and indigenous species are threatened. Carcasses of dolphin and sea turtle have been found.

Influences for changes in the fisheries development

The present fisheries development is moving towards better cooperation between fisheries communities and government agencies, due to international pressureand the need for responsible fisheries through balancing ecological well-being and social well being- including economic prosperity. Changes in fisheries activities will be gradual, instead of issuing prohibitions.

Under the results of the research works: It was concluded that:

- *Rastrelliger,* which maturesat 10cm in length, were caught by gill net and bamboo stake traps Sometimes the size caught was less than 10 cm especially from bamboo stake trap;
- Pair trawlers caught *Rastrelliger*of a size less than 10 cm, abundantly.Spawners were found in February and small fish occurred in AoTrat in March;
    - Dolphin was found abundantly in the eastern coast of the Gulf,
    - In Trat, there are several species of sea grasses that offer food and shelter for young fish. The sea grass beds are not so fertile nowadays.

Group discussions were held during the afternoon session. Following discussions each of the three groups presented their findings. There was then an open discussion lead by Dr. KungwanChantrachote: The main findings of each of the groupswere as follows:

Group 1led by Mr. ThongchaiEidleng proposed:

- No pairtrawlers in Area 1,
- Experiment to close areas1,2 & 3 for two months;
- Allow only local fishing boats to fish;
- No fishing boats of more than 20 ton gross allowed to fish in areas 1,2&3;
- No purse seine in areas 1,2 &3;
- The Group could not agree on proposals to close areas 2 & 3 or areas 1 & 2.

Group 2 led by Mr. SurapongIntraprasert:

- Area 1 Open only for small scale fisheries;
- Area 2 No agreement;
- Area 3 Close up to 10 km from shoreline (February to March) for commercial fisheries

Group 3 led by Mr. DanaiChantasee:

- No commercial fishing of *Rastrelligers* bypair trawlers, purse seines or gill net in Areas 1,2 & 3
- Small scale fisheries allowed in all areas except for *Rastrelliger* gillnet in October to November;
- Government should consider giving license for outside fishing boats to fish in the conservation area!

Dr. Kungwan concluded that the participants had mostly agreed with the management plan for the AoTrat area although some different ideas on the dates and seasons for closing areas still existed. The participants mostly agreed to have a conservation plan for AoTrat resources by

using closed areas and closed seasons and limiting the use if some fishing gear.More discussion is required before a final consensusbased on participatory management measures, can be achieved.

Mrs. PraulaiNootmorn, the Director of Research and Technology Instituteclosed the Meeting.

Agenda

Stakeholder Consultant Meeting

Area and Season Closure in Trat province

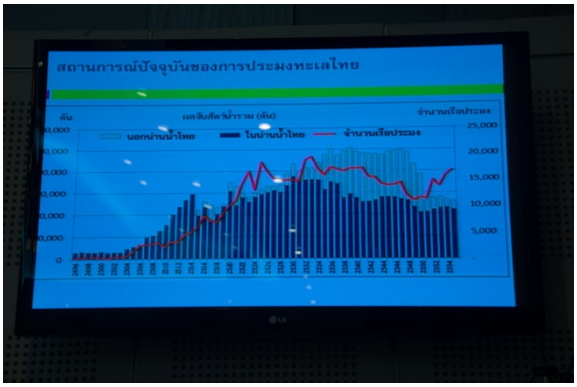
REBYC-II CTI; GCP /RAS/269/GFF

29-30 November 2015

Baan Poo Resort and Spa in Trat province

29 November 2015	
16.00-18.30 hr	Hotel Register
30 November 2015	
08.30-09.00 hr	Meeting register
09.00-09.30.	Opening: Mrs. Pauli Nootmorn
	(Director, Research and Technology Institute)
09.30-09.50	REBYC-II CTI Project brief Mr. SuchartSangchan)
09.50-12.15	Panelists
	(Mr. PavarotNoranarttragoon-project expert, Dr. SirisudaJumnongsong-project expert; Mr. ThanasSrikoom, Miss ChalatipChanchompoo and Mr. PiyachokSinanan, researchers)
	Chairperson (Dr. KungwanChantrachote)
	Open Discussion on Results the commercial fisheries situation in Trat; the small-scale fisheries situation in Trat; the socioeconomic of fishers in Trat; Management option;management formulation under appropriated research works.
12.15-13.15.	Lunch
13.15-14.45	Four Groupspresentation
14.45-15.00.	Refreshment
15.00-16.15.	Panel conclusion (Dr. KangwanChantrachote)
16.15-16.30 .	The meeting is closed by Mrs. Pauli Nootmorn.

Photographs from the Meeting




EXIT


กลุ่ม 1


กลุ่ม 1


ตนธักษ์
อ่าวตราด


การประชุมกลุ่มผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียในจังหวัดตราด
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