



**Establishment and Operation of a Regional System of
Fisheries *Refugia* in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand**

REPORT

NATIONAL FISHERIES REFUGIA COMMITTEE MEETING

PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA
29 MAY 2019

Prepared by
DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES, MALAYSIA

SOUTHEAST ASIAN FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT CENTER
TRAINING DEPARTMENT



First published in Phrasamutchedi, Samut Prakan, Thailand in May 2019 by the SEAFDEC-UNEP-GEF Fisheries Refugia Project, Training Department of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center

Copyright © 2019, SEAFDEC-UNEP-GEF Fisheries *Refugia* Project

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part and in any form for educational or non-profit purposes without special permission from the copyright holder provided acknowledgement of the source is made. The SEAFDEC-UNEP-GEF Fisheries *Refugia* Project would appreciate receiving a copy of any publication that uses this publication as a source.

No use of this publication may be made for resale or for any other commercial purpose without prior permission in writing from the SEAFDEC Secretary-General at.

Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center
Training Department
P.O.Box 97, Phrasamutchedi, Samut Prakan, Thailand
Tel: (66) 2 425 6100
Fax: (66) 2 425 6110
<https://fisheries-refugia.org> and
<https://seafdec.or.th>

DISCLAIMER:

The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center, the United Nations Environment Programme, and the Global Environment Facility.

For citation purposes this document may be cited as:

DOF/Malaysia. 2019. Establishment and Operation of a Regional System of Fisheries Refugia in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand, Report of National Fisheries Refugia Committee Meeting. Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center, Training Department, Samut Prakan, Thailand; FR/REP/MY19, 6 p.

Venue

Mutiara Meeting Room, Level 6, Block 4G2, Wisma Tani, Presint 4, Federal Territory of Putrajaya, Malaysia

1. CHAIRPERSON KEYNOTE

- 1.1 The Establishment and Operation of a Regional System of Fisheries Refugia in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand is an initiative of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC).
- 1.2 This project is to manage and preserve the important marine species and habitats in the Southeast Asian region and was participated by six (6) regional countries namely Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.
- 1.3 In 2016, a total allocation of USD 3.0 million was approved by the SEAFDEC / UNEP / GEF to be distributed to the participating countries. Malaysia is expected to receive an allocation of USD250,000 (approx. RM1 million) over a four-year period. Besides that, Malaysia also supports the implementation of this project at the national level by co-financing (in-kind and cash) through the existing budget of the Department of Fisheries Malaysia (DOF).
- 1.4 This project will take four years (2017-2020) for completion and will be extended until 2021 due to the merge with South China Sea Project at the regional level. Two areas have been selected as refugee sites in Malaysia namely Tanjung Leman, Johor for lobster and Kuala Baram, Sarawak for the tiger prawn. The project will involve a number of components such as establishing a national and site committee, scientific research, consultation with stakeholders, educational programs and others.
- 1.5 Malaysia signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with SEAFDEC on June 20, 2017. An allocation of USD42,362 was channeled to Malaysia through the Southeast Asia Institute of Marine Resources (ISMAT) / SEAFDEC in early 2018 and 2019.
- 1.6 The allocation will be given by Project Coordinating Unit (PCU), SEAFDEC based on the application of the Cash Advance Request which subject to the Quarterly Costed Work Plan. The plan will be by the National Scientific and Technical Committee (NSTC) and approved by the National Fisheries Refugia Committee (NFRC) and submitted to PCU.
- 1.7 The purpose of this meeting is:
 - 1.7.1 To update on the current status of the project;
 - 1.7.2 To endorse Quarterly Costed Work Plan for Q2, Q3 an Q4/2020

2. DISCUSSION

- 2.1 **Establishment of National Fisheries Refugia Committee**
 - 2.1.1 The committee was informed that two (2) national committees have been established for the Fisheries Refugia Project:
 - a) National Fisheries Refugia Committee will be chaired by YBhg. Dato' Bah Piyon Tan, Deputy Director General of Fisheries (Management). Whereas, the alternate chairman will be Mr. Wan Muhammad Aznan bin Abdullah, Director of the Fisheries and Licensing Division.

- b) National Scientific and Technical Committee will be chaired by Mr. Hadil bin Rajali, Senior Deputy Director of Fisheries Research Institute, Batu Maung. The alternate chairman is Mr. Richard Rumpet, Director of Fisheries Research Institute Bintawa.

2.2 Concept of Fisheries Refugia

- 2.2.1 Fisheries Refugia is a new approach which has been introduced to identify and rehabilitate the major fisheries habitats in the South China Sea and Gulf of Siam. This concept is different from the Marine Park because refugia involves a closed season during the critical stages of a species' life cycle during spawning and nursery. Whereas, marine park is a no take zone throughout the year and fishing activities are strictly prohibited.

2.3 Fisheries Refugia Project Status

- 2.3.1 Committee took note that Mr. Richard Rumpet presented two (2) papers at the 2nd Regional Scientific and Technical Committee Meeting in Kampot Province, Cambodia on May 24-25, 2019 as follows:
 - a) Progress Work of the Project Activities in Malaysia (June 2018-May 2019) (Appendix 1); and
 - b) Fisheries Refugia Centers at National Level: Lessons Learned from Malaysia (Appendix 2).

2.4 Species Selection by Country

- 2.4.1 Committee was informed that there are specific species selected by five (5) member countries at 13 other refugee sites, namely:
 - a) Cambodia: *short mackerel, juvenile grouper, blue swimming crab*
 - b) Thailand: *short mackerel, blue swimming crab*
 - c) Vietnam: *short mackerel, anchovy, frigate tuna*
 - d) Indonesia: *small pelagic fish, penaid shrimp*
 - e) Philippines: *rabbit fish, frigate tuna, mud crab, fusilier fish*

2.5 Tiger Prawn Resource Survey

- 2.5.1 Committee was informed that FRI Bintawa has been conducting research on tiger prawn in Kuala Baram since 1994. In Sarawak, tiger prawn is mostly found in Miri waters and some in the other districts of Kuching, Kabong and Lawas. Studies also found that Tanjung Batu to Kuala Baram waters in Miri is a nursery ground for the tiger prawn.
- 2.5.2 This year the resource survey will be focusing on the juvenile tiger prawn in the rivers around Kuala Baram. This is an important location to identify the nursery area of the tiger prawn.

2.6 Closed Season for Lobster

- 2.6.1 The closed season of the lobster will be determined upon the information regarding on the spawning season has been obtained.
- 2.6.2 The lobster breeding season is expected to start from July to October. Theoretically, the location of the breeding will be at the rocky area leading to deeper water. However, further research needs to be done to determine the specific location for the purpose of closed area.
- 2.6.3 The committee was informed that most of the tiger prawns are caught by the trawlers and small percentage by traps and drift nets. Therefore,

landing sampling study known as fisheries independent data is currently has been carried out in order to determine the maturity size of the lobster (length at the first maturity).

2.6.4 This process can be initiated by consulting the stakeholders through the EAFM.

2.7 **The Gazettement of Kuala Baram Site**

2.7.1 The proposed refugia site in Kuala Baram is located below the three (3) nautical miles from the coastline which involves the overlapping jurisdiction of the several agencies such namely Port Authority and the Sarawak State Forestry Department.

2.7.2 JPLS has discussed with the Forestry Department so that site gazettelement could be together such Luconia Shoal and Miri-Sibuti National Park.

2.7.3 The committee noted that the proposal of the refugia site should be extended to UPEN Sarawak so that coordination could be done at the state level.

2.8 **Costed Quarterly Work Plan and Cash Advance Request**

2.8.1 Committee was informed on the amount allocated for each quarter as follows:

- a. Q2 (Apr - June 2019) = USD22,498.89 (RM93,440)
 - b. Q3 (Jul- Sept 2019) = USD57,146.02 (RM237,440)
 - c. Q4 (Oct- Dec2019) = USD69,153.38 (RM277,440)
- (Q2-Q4 as in Annex 3)

2.8.2 Cash will be channeled to Malaysia through ISMAT / SEAFDEC. An internal audit which funded by SEAFDEC / UNEP / GEF will be carried out on the project account.

2.8.3 The committee endorsed the Costed Quarterly Work Plan of Q2, Q3 and Q4. The documents will be submitted to PCU Bangkok in soonest time.

3. **OTHER MATTERS**

3.1 **Participating Countries Contribution Ratio**

3.1.1 Each country has a commitment to provide co-financing in either kind or cash to this project in a 4: 1 ratio compared to the allocation provided by SEAFDEC / UNEP / GEF.

3.2 **2nd Project Steering Committee (PSC2) Meeting**

3.2.1 Malaysia has been selected as the host of the PSC2 Meeting scheduled on 5-6 November 2019 in Miri, Sarawak. Any organizing of an international meeting is subject to Cabinet's approval.

3.3 **The Socioeconomic Study**

3.3.1 The community of fishermen involved should be identified and appropriate programs should be introduced to fishermen to cover their living expenses during the closed season.

4. **CLOSING**

4.1 The chairperson thanked all the attendees and the meeting adjourned at 12.30 noon.

List of participants

NO.	NAME	AGENCY
1	Dato' Dr. Bah Piyan Tan	Department of Fisheries Malaysia
2	Mr Hadil bin Rajali	Fisheries Research Institute
3	Mr Wan Muhammad Aznan bin Abdullah	Department of Fisheries Malaysia
4	Dato' Haji Azahari bin Othman	Department of Fisheries Malaysia
5	Mr Zamani bin Omar	Department of Fisheries Malaysia
6	Mr Ram Singh a/l Hari Singh	Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry
7	Mr Mohd. Ruslan bin Abdullah	Ministry of Agriculture and Agro-Based Industry
8	Mr Richard Rumpet	Fisheries Research Institute
9	Mr Hazijah binti Yusuf	Sarawak Planning Unit
10	Mr Fakhruddin bin Sharif	Johor State Economic Planning Division
11	Mr Zuriana binti Mohd. Noh	Pahang State Planning Unit
12	Mr Ahmad Adnan bin Nuruddin	Project Manager
13	Mr Nor Azmi bin Ahmad	Ministry of Water, Land and Natural Resources
14	Mrs Che Rahayu binti Rahalim	Fisheries Development Authority of Malaysia
15	Mr Mohd. Zamri bin Mohd. Nor	Marine Police, Bukit Aman
16	Commander (M) Yousri bin Yaali	Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency
17	Leftenan Madya (M) Zool Hilmi bin Mohd. Nadzir	Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency
18	Mr Wan Bujang bin Wan Lela	Ministry of Modernisation of Agriculture, Native Land and Regional Development Sarawak
19	Mr Kashminder Singh a/l Ajaib Singh	Ministry of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment & Climate Change
20	Mrs Liza binti Haji Long	Department of Marine Fisheries Sarawak
21	Ms Uraini binti Ujang	Department of Fisheries Malaysia
22	Mrs Noor Hasmayana binti Yahaya	Department of Fisheries Malaysia
23	Mr Ryon Siow	Fisheries Research Institute
24	Mr Ahmad Faidzi bin Kastolany	Department of Fisheries Malaysia
25	Mrs Rathi Sai Muniandy	Department of Fisheries Malaysia
26	Mrs Haryati binti Abd. Wahab	Department of Fisheries Malaysia