

# TRAINING AND EXTENSION PROGRAMS ON RESPONSIBLE FISHING IN THAILAND

by

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## Abstract

The marine fisheries status has declined in stock and become very critical issue at present. Fisheries regulations and notifications have been issued for solving the problems of fisheries management. Responsible fishing is a new concept developing for the fisheries resources recovery that required more rehabilitation training and extension programs. In Thailand efforts to conserve the fisheries resources such as fisheries regulations by means of close area, close season and mesh size limitation are being enforced. Training and extension programs for fishermen and other people concerned including many conservative projects have been done by the Department of fisheries.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Fisheries sector in Thailand has turn from subsistence, to provide food for household and some cash to cover day-to-day expenses of households, to a large scale industry which contribute a significant amount to the economic of the country. In 1992, fisheries industry contributed US\$ 1,275 million, which equal to 1.4% of the gross domestic product (GDP) and accounted for 11% of agriculture GDP. Fishery production was at 2.96 million tons valued at US\$ 2.12 billion. There are 400,000 people engaged in fishery sector, of which 90,000 are full time fishermen. Fisheries production composed of 88.5% from capture fishery and 11.5% from culture fishery. However, more than 95% of the capture fishery production/came from marine capture fisheries. The coastline of Thailand shares its borders with three neighbouring countries, namely, Myanmar, Kampuchea and Malaysia. The total length of its coastal boundary along the Gulf of Thailand and Andaman Sea are 1,878 km. and 937 km., respectively, amounting to 2,815 km. altogether.

During the past three decades, the country's marine fisheries have been rapidly developed, contributing to an average output of about two million tons per annum. This has place Thailand to the top ten marine fishing producing countries world-wide. Nevertheless, the proclamation of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) by neighbouring countries in 1980 has resulted in loosing about 800,000 square kilometers of Thai fishing ground as well as bringing about fishing conflicts. To resolve the problems, Thai Government has promoted the joint-venture in fishing with other coastal states and deep sea fishing in recent years. Moreover, the results of overfishing in Thai territorial waters and lack of marine fisheries resources have affected the conflicts between

commercial fisheries and small scale fisheries or even in each type of fishery itself. Due to the serious marine fisheries status, sustainable fisheries have become very important at present. Hence, the Seventh National Economic and Social Development Plan which took effect from 1992 to 1996, some part of nation fisheries programs were aimed to control the utilization of marine fisheries resources as follows:

### **1.1 Domestic fisheries programs**

Three major measures were adopted to ensure achieving the objectives as follows:

- 1) Strictly control use of fisheries resources and set up of appropriate management system by emphasis on both development and conservation.
- 2) Promote effective-use of fisheries resources and environment for purpose of maximum sustainable production.
- 3) Promote fisheries occupation to farmers and support technology and all kinds of aid to aquatic farmers reducing the fisheries effort in capture fishery.

### **1.2 Deep-sea fisheries programs**

This programs deal with promotion and development of deep-sea fisheries, increasing new fishing grounds of Thai fishing fleet, finding raw material for in-country fisheries industry, control and regulate fisheries associations to combine with agreement on joint-venture fisheries with other countries.

At present the problems of shortage of fisheries resources have not occurred only in Thailand but in world-wide too. Then, responsible fishing should be a new concept of fishing to solve those problems and need more understanding to achieve the target of sustainable fisheries.

## **2. TRAINING AND EXTENSION PROGRAMS ON RESPONSIBLE FISHING**

At present training and extension programs in term of responsible fishing are quite few. Most of training and extension programs have been conducted on aquaculture which deals with two major components: aquaculture extension for subsistence purpose and aquaculture extension for commercial purpose. However, in capture fisheries, many of fisheries regulations and notification were issued to control the fishing activities and stock of marine fisheries resources such as:

## 2.1 Close area

In the area within 3,000 meters from the shoreline and islands, motorized trawling is prohibited to be operated all the year round. The purpose of this regulation is to protect the nursing ground and juvenile of fishes.

## 2.2 Close area and season

Three major areas (Figure 1) are prohibited for trawling and purse seining during the period of time:

- 1) In the inner gulf of the Gulf of Thailand from 1 September to the end of February to protect the nursing ground.
- 2) In the area of Prachaupkirikhan, Chumporn and Suratthani provinces in the middle part of the South of Thailand from 15 February to 15 May each year. The purpose of this regulation is to protect the spawner and juvenile of fishes especially Indo-Pacific and Indian mackerels.
- 3) In the area of Phangnga and Krabi provinces in the Andaman Sea from 15 April to 15 June each year to protect the spawner and juvenile of fishes.

## 2.3 Mesh size limitation

Some fishing gears are limited the mesh size of the net such as purse seine, light luring purse seine, squid light luring liftnet and limitation of sieve size for short-neck clam dredge. Furthermore, the Department of Fisheries is going to implement the mesh size limitation for codend of trawl net.

The major purposes of fisheries regulation are to protect the spawner, juvenile, nursing ground and spawning ground and the objective of aquaculture extensions are to reduce the fishing activities. Moreover, there are many projects for fisheries conservation which related to responsible fishing aspect:

### 2.3.1 Coral reef project

This project has conducted since 1993 to protect the coral reef from fishing activities, tourism, pollution and others activities concerned. The activities of this project compose of 3 major fields:

#### *Research activities*

- survey and mapping of coral reef
- identification of species composition

- classify the status of coral reef
- experiment on the protection and expansion of the coral reef

#### *Extension activities*

- producing the promotion media such as VDO tapes, posters, pamphlets, booklets and distributed to the fisheries offices, fishermen organization and communities
- television and radio broadcasting are also usually used for project promotion
- installation of parking spot for tourist boats in the coral reef
- indicating of the coral reef by line marker and buoy.

#### *Training activities*

- training courses for teachers
- training courses for students

The objectives of training are the knowledge of species, benefit of coral reef to the fisheries resources, environment concerned and the understanding of coral reef conservation.

#### 2.3.2 Small scale fisheries project

This project aim to help the small scale fishermen by increasing their income and facilitate the infrastructure for fisheries. The details of the project are as follow:

- provide the fishing gears which are the selective fishing gear such as gill net and trap to reduce the number of non-selective fishing gear such as trawl net and push net
- provide the infrastructure facilities to convince the fishermen changing their fishing gear from non-selective to selective fishing gears
- arrange the training courses for the leader of small scale fishermen to know the concept of sustainable or responsible fishing

- introduce the fisheries management by fishermen communities which is the basic knowledge for fishing right
- establishment of fishermen association to organize and manage their activities by themselves.

### 2.3.3 TED installation for shrimp trawler.

Turtle Excluder Device: TED is one method to conserve the sea turtle from the incidental catch by shrimp trawl net. Therefore, the Department of Fisheries introduced this equipment to the fishermen by arranging the workshop on the use of Thai Turtle Free Device in shrimp trawler to convince shrimp trawl fishermen fixing the Thai-TED in their nets.

### 2.3.4 Seed releasing project

Seed releasing projects have been conducted by the Department of fisheries to recover the abundant of the fishing ground. Species released are shrimp, sea bass grouper and snapper.

### 2.3.5 Fishermen training center

Fishermen training center was established in 1994, located at Chumporn province, Thailand. The objectives of training are to up-grade the knowledge of the fishermen in fisheries and also the responsible fishing. The list of training courses in 1997 are as follow:

- Maintenance of marine engine
- Coastal navigation
- Radio system for fishing boat
- Fiberglas technique for fishing equipments and design
- Introduction of Fishing right  
(Small scale fisheries management by fishermen)

In each training course, fisheries regulation, the basic knowledge of responsible fishing and the fisheries environmental aspects will be add in the details of training. Moreover, this center will provide the training facilities for the training courses of fisheries officer.

## 3. OTHER ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE RESPONSIBLE FISHING

There are also the protection projects on the endanger species such as sea turtle, Dugong and dolphin which are prohibited for fishing by Fisheries Act. Moreover

the Department of fisheries are now trying to pursued NGOs to have more involvement in fisheries management by means of fishing right, of which NGOs would o-operate with fishermen in each village in managing fisheries resources in the sea area in front of each particular village.

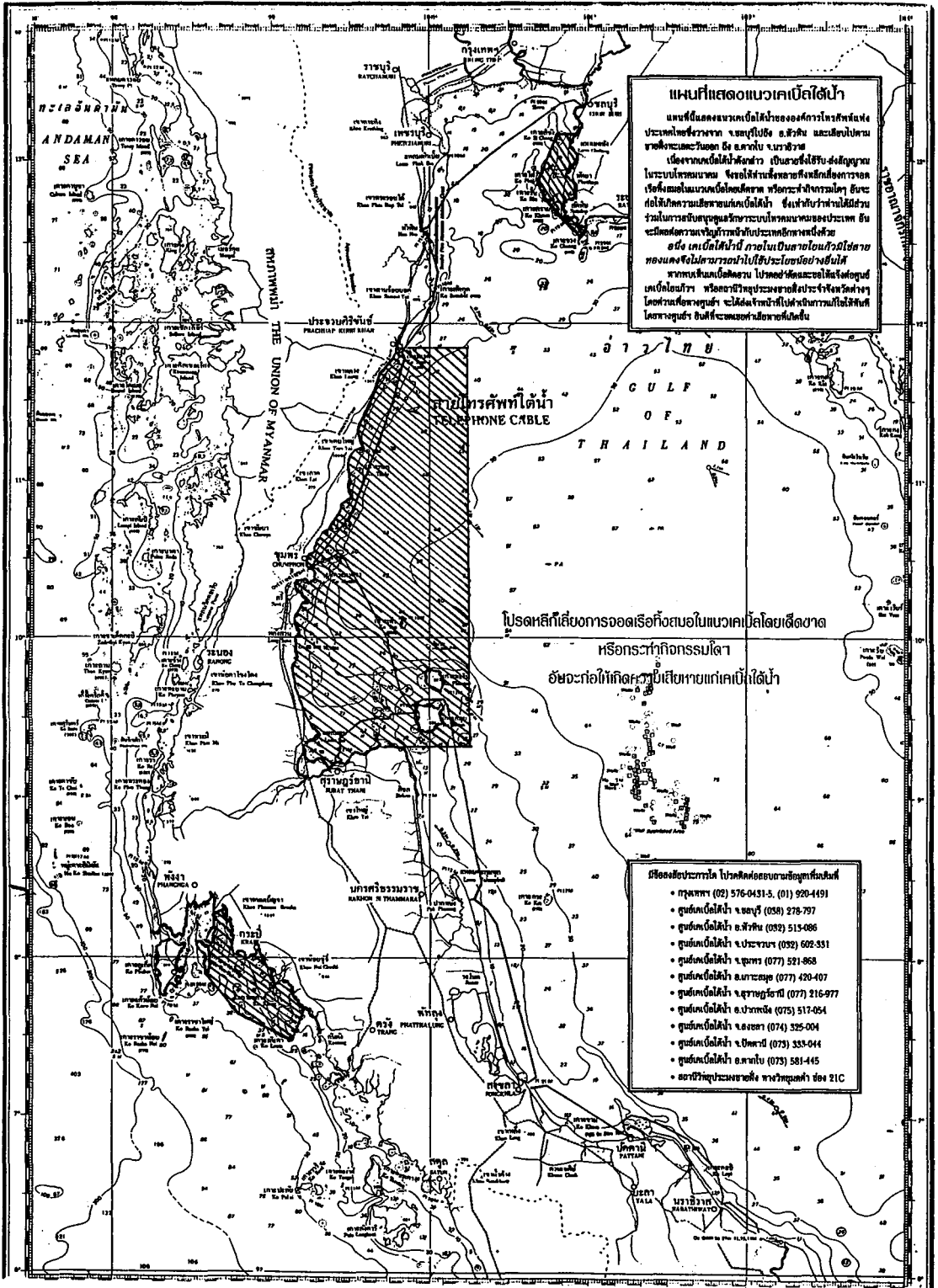


Figure 1.