

## Deployment of ICRM Projects in the Southeast Asian Countries

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### **Introduction**

In most Southeast Asian countries, the deterioration of livelihoods in coastal fishing communities resulting from the over-exploitation of fishery resources and the degradation of coastal environments had become a pivotal concern for fishery policy makers that steered the relevant authorities to introduce some measures to improve the situation. One of the approaches recognized as appropriate was the introduction of the concept of community-based fisheries management (CBFM) within the framework of the devolution of coastal fisheries development and management.

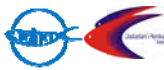
Based on the SEAFDEC project on the Regionalization of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and under the collaborative mechanism of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Fisheries Consultative Group (FCG), Thailand was designated as the lead country for the SEAFDEC Member Countries and the SEAFDEC Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD) as the Lead SEAFDEC Department for activities related to fisheries management. Thus, SEAFDEC/TD collaborated with the Department of Fisheries (DOF) of Thailand in implementing a coastal resource management program. This led to the reformatting of an existing project proposal on coastal resource management for Chumpon Province prepared by DOF Thailand as it became a joint initiative with SEAFDEC/TD. It was further agreed that the knowledge and experience gained through the project operation in Thailand would be disseminated to the other SEAFDEC Member Countries through the technology transfer mechanism of SEAFDEC.

### **Locally Based Coastal Resources Management/Integrated Coastal Resources Management Project**

Consequently, the five-year project on “Locally Based Coastal Fishery Management in Pathew District (LBCFM-PD)” commenced in November 2001 in Chumpon Province, Thailand with the overall objectives of: (1) establishing sustainable coastal resources management mechanism at the local level; (2) rehabilitating the coastal fishery resources; and (3) alleviating poverty in coastal fishing communities.

The LBCFM-PD project had produced tangible impact as acknowledged by the SEAFDEC Member Countries during the 4<sup>th</sup> SEAFDEC FCG Meeting in Myanmar in March 2002 and at the 25<sup>th</sup> SEAFDEC Program Committee Meeting in Singapore in October 2002. It was during the latter meeting that a recommendation was raised to impart the technologies including the experience and knowledge gained from the project LBCFM-PD to the other Member Countries. In this connection, the Committee Member for Malaysia offered Langkawi as a pilot site for the implementation of a similar approach to the LBCFM-PD project. Subsequently, SEAFDEC/TD missions to Langkawi were organized to look into the possibility of setting up a similar coastal fishery resources management and development project. Eventually, the second project on “Locally Based Coastal Resources Management – Pulau Langkawi (LBCRM-PL)” took off in August 2003 for a period of four years.

These two projects were jointly financed by their respective governments and the Japanese Trust Fund I Program in SEAFDEC through TD, and later reformulated to fit into the new thrust of the Japanese Trust Fund IV Program, which commenced in 2005 under the new program domain on “Capacity Building of Human Resources and Participation in Integrated Coastal Resources Management”. Since this new program placed more emphasis on human resources development (HRD), the projects’ titles were changed correspondingly into Integrated Coastal Resources Management in Pathew District (ICRM-PD) and Integrated Coastal Resources Management in Langkawi (ICRM-PL) to take into consideration the thrust of the new program, and eventually comprising the second phase of the project.



Meanwhile, further recommendations were put forward at the SEAFDEC Program Committee meetings (PCM) in 2003 and 2004 specifying that experiences and knowledge gained through these project operations should be transferred to other SEAFDEC Member Countries under the collaborative project approach. To this end, the other Member Countries expressed their intentions to initiate similar projects in their respective countries. Finally, it was decided that the 3<sup>rd</sup> project would take place in Cambodia taking into account the geographical advantage and the prioritized need of a CBRM approach in the country. The preliminary site survey was carried out in June 2004 to inspect the proposed site and to collect relevant data and information with regards to responsible community fisheries. Based on the findings and observations from the survey, a tentative work-plan was submitted to the 27<sup>th</sup> PCM held in December 2004 which was subsequently endorsed. Thus, steps were then taken to put the project forward and for the initiation of the actual activities in 2005. Eventually, the project commenced its operation on 11 November 2005 signaling its three-year tenure.

While the ICRM-PD project in Chumphon was terminated in December 2006, the ICRM-PL project in Langkawi, Malaysia had also progressed but was disrupted on 26 December 2004 when the devastating tsunami damaged the project operational area in Langkawi. Most fishing gear and boats were destroyed or lost, and the fish landing facilities were ruined. Thereafter, the project orientation was changed in order to focus on the rehabilitation of the area including repair of the fishing fleet. In order to pursue the remaining activities based on the original objective, the project for another three years until December 2007. With the main focus of the project activity in 2005 and 2006 placed on the rehabilitation of the fishing fleet and fishery facilities damaged by the tsunami, it was only toward the end of 2007 that the fishing activity had more or less resumed as it was in 2004 before the tsunami. Consequently, the project activities which have also normalized in early 2007 had to be terminated in December 2007 with the final project evaluation conducted in March 2008. Meanwhile, the project ICRM-SV in Sihanoukville, Cambodia, has been extended for another year until the end of 2009 to complete the on-going activities in connection with coastal fishery resources management practices following the community development approach.



● The ICRM pilot projects implemented by SEAFDEC in Thailand (Pathew District, Chumphon Province: ICRM-PD), in Malaysia (Pulau Langkawi: ICRM-PL), and in Cambodia (Sihanoukville: ICRM-SV)

The timeframe of the implementation of the ICRM projects in Thailand, Malaysia and Cambodia focusing on the introduction of the CBRM concept to the Southeast Asian countries, is as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Timeframe of ICRM implementation in Southeast Asia (2001-2009)**

No	Component	Year								
		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
1	Component 1: Thailand LBCFM-PD: 1st Phase (JTF - 1) ICRM-PD: 2nd Phase (JTF - 4)									
2	Component 1: Malaysia LBCRM-PL: 1st Phase (JTF - 1) ICRM-PL: 2nd Phase (JTF - 4)									
3	Component 2: Cambodia ICRM-SV (JTF - 4)									

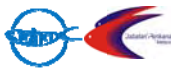
**Regional Seminar on Integrated Coastal Resources Management Approach in Southeast Asia**

As the first component of the LBCRM/ICRM project, the LBCRM-PD/ICRM-PD in Chumphon Province, Thailand was completed in 2006. The project’s progress in the span of five years and two months had been reported in detail in the respective biannual progress reports. To consolidate the reports, a review of the achievement of LBCRM-PD/ICRM-PD project and its impacts to the target fishing communities was conducted through the Regional Seminar on Integrated Coastal Resources Management in Southeast Asia: Lessons Learned through the Integrated Coastal Resources Management in Pathew District, Chumphon Province (ICRM-PD) in Chumphon, Thailand from 10 to 12 July 2007. The said Regional Seminar aimed to: (1) report on the achievement and outcome of the project during its 5-year implementation and review its progress in line with the original project concept; (2) verify the impacts of the concept to the beneficiaries from the project’s activities in terms of quantity as well as quality considering both facets of community development as well as sustainable fishery resources management; (3) discuss the resultant rationale and implication in the dissemination of the project concept to other SEAFDEC Member Countries under component 2; and (4) identify the necessary follow-up actions to be undertaken by Thailand and other collaborating local agencies.

As a matter of policy in the implementation of the LBCRM/ICRM project, the final evaluation of each sub-project should be done by an external consultant. In the case of the LBCRM-PD/ICRM-PD project, the final project evaluation was conducted by Dr. Somsak Boromthanasat of the Coastal Resources Institute (CORIN) of Prince of Songkhla University, Hat Yai, Songkhla, Thailand. In his report, he commended the project design and objectives as such were able to address the core need of the fishers in the project site. He also noted that the project components, namely: baseline survey, CBRM supporting activities, local business development, human resources development, extension services, and resource enhancement were very relevant and directly contributed to the development of CBRM in the project site.

Moreover, during the Regional Seminar in Chumphon, the participants considered the outcomes of the project to be very substantial and conducive not only for the beneficiaries but also for the agencies which took over the operation of the project after the completion of the direct involvement by SEAFDEC/TD. The proceedings of the first Regional Seminar were compiled and published in September 2007.

Similarly, the second regional seminar on ICRM was organized in October 2008 in order to review the impacts made by the project operation to the fishing communities. Therefore, as a similar exercise the Regional Seminar on Integrated Coastal Resources Management Approach in Southeast Asia: Review of the Project ICRM-PL was held in Langkawi, Malaysia from 21 to 23 October 2008.



The Seminar in Langkawi was attended by the executive agencies involved in the ICRM-PL such as the DOF Malaysia and SEAFDEC/TD under the collaborative project operational scheme. In addition, representatives from the related agencies involved in the project operation, e.g. the Fisheries Development Authority of Malaysia (LKIM), Fishery Research Institute (FRI) in Penang, Fisheries Institute of Malaysia (IPM), State Fisheries Office in Kedah, Langkawi Development Authority (LADA), and Drainage and Irrigation Department in Langkawi (JPS) also showed their support. Moreover, the most important persons who attended the Seminar were the representatives from the fishermen's group, i.e. the Fishermen Economic Group (KEN) which was re-organized later into the Fishery Resources Management Community (KPSP) and Women Economic Group (KEW) as the priority beneficiaries of this project. The report of the final evaluation of ICRM-PL which was done by an outsourced consultant was also presented during the Regional Seminar.

The field trip to inspect the various activities in the project site in Kuala Teriang, Langkawi was also included in the Seminar in Langkawi. Although the project operation under the collaborative regime with DOF Malaysia and SEAFDEC/TD has been terminated, the main activities have been ongoing at the follow-up stage under the supervision of the DOF Malaysia and other related agencies including the Kuala Teriang Fishery Resources Management Community (KPSP), which has expanded its pivotal role in the planning and implementation of the project.

### Sustainability of the ICRM-PL

In terms of the sustainability of the activities of the ICRM-PL, it was emphasized on various occasions that it is vital for the KPSP in particular, to continue this self-regulatory fishery resources management regime after the completion of the project initiatives by SEAFDEC/TD and DOF Malaysia. As seen in Fig. 1, the managerial responsibility in the fishery resources management activity introduced by the joint initiatives of SEAFDEC/TD and DOF Malaysia has been eventually shifted to the KPSP towards the end of the follow-up stage. However, it was also agreed that the DOF Malaysia should continue its involvement in this activity as the supervising and supporting agency even after completion of the follow-up stage.

**Fig. 1. Initiatives and involvements in the project operation**

