

SEAFDEC Roles and Involvement on Thailand Fisheries Observer Program

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Introduction

According to European Union Commission has declared a yellow card for Thailand on 21st April 2015 and assign a dateline to solving that problem in six month. The Department of Fisheries (DOF) has set plan to tackle Illegal Unreported Unregulated (IUU Fishing) such as the registration of all fishing vessel, Installation Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) on vessels over 30 tons gross, Established system for Port in – Port out and national plan of action and the importance one implementation of traceability by preparing and monitoring systems for marine products caught by fishing boat in Thailand an imported. In order to determine whether a product of IUU Fishing and monitor to the processing plant. It is necessary to establish an observer onboard as a part of Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS). Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center Training Department (SEAFDEC/TD) is an organization that DOF has invited for consultants on this project due to the experience of fisheries including have Instructor and training vessel Namely M.V.SEAFFDEC2 that potential sufficient to train the observers on board.

Fisheries Observer Program to make focusing the observer who can take a position on fishing boat in high sea, overseas fishing vessel and Thai flag carrier vessel. This project can support fishing law fully because the observer can control the size of product by fishing, identify endangered species although used true kind of fishing instrument. The program can serve as information provider fisheries dependent information on catch and effort, stock assessment and other fisheries regulation compliance.

Methodology

DOF and SEAFDEC/TD meeting with related organization to define the scope and plan for development of observer onboard program of Thailand. The main issue is the program on fisheries observer onboard. So, the meeting concluded to hold an orientation workshop in order to transfer knowledge and increase understanding on the scope observer onboard in RFMOs area to participants from DOF staff. Consequence, to develop Observer Program and implementation draft plan for the project observer onboard related to IOTC model course.

Training for the observers onboard was started during 17th November – 3rd December 2015. This is a pilot project in order to be trainer (training for the trainer) in the next generation at Maruay Garden Hotel in Bangkok. This project has four instructors from SEAFDEC/TD to give the knowledge in subject a fishing vessels and gears, Basic of Navigation. The total number of eighteen participants from DOF and two staffs from SEAFDEC/TD to attend the training course.

Outline of lecture for the training course.

- Legal and Regulation - International agreement (IOTC convention), Thailand fisheries law and regulations.

- Data Collections- Species Identification, Fish sampling, measuring and weighting techniques, Data collection code and data collection formats, Use of digital recorders.
- Recording forms and document –Techniques of verification of catch logbook, estimating catch and species composition, filling out the forms, verbal debriefing and Report Writing.
- Fisheries management- Monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS).
- Fishing vessel and gears -Vessel Identifications and markings, Gear Identification and marking: tuna long liners, trawlers, purse seiners, Electronic equipment and understanding their operations.
- Navigation - Knowledge of navigation (Latitude/Longitude, compasses, bearing, chart work, plotting a position etc.), Weather Observation.
- Radio Communications.
- Basic training of seaman- Fire Prevention, Personal survival technique, Elementary first-aid, Personal safety and social responsibility, Safety awareness.

For Shipboard Training, During 30th November – 3rd December 2015

The shipboard training was carried out by M.V.SEAFFDEC2 the training and research vessel of SEAFFDEC/TD. On 30th November 2015, at 08.00 hrs the 20 participants embarked the ship. At 11.00 hrs the ship was left SEAFFDEC/TD's pier for fishing ground (Rin Island) in the upper Gulf of Thailand and during the ship was sailing a distance 40 nautical miles to fishing ground, the orientation of the shipboard training was started. Two kinds of fishing gears as Tuna Long line and Bottom Trawl were selected and prepared for fishing operation. The detail of activities as follows;

On 30th November 2015 after the ship arrived the fishing ground. Fishing trial was started at 14.50 – 16.15 hrs by Bottom Trawl with speed of ship 3.5 kts in the depth of 30 - 40 m. This fishing operation was caught amount 9.5 kgs of fish to species identification and measure. The kinds of fish such as Painted sweetlips (*Diagramma picta*), Golden trevally (*Gnathanodon speciosus*), Goatfish (*Upenes tragula* and *Upenes sundaicus*), Trumpeter fish (*Terapon theraps*) Squid (*Photololigo duvaucelii*) and others. In the evening, at 19.00 – 20.00 hrs has a presentation outline of Japan Observer Program and exchange information Japan's fisheries observer for development by Dr. Osamu Abe Deputy the Chief SEAFFDEC of MFRDMD from Malaysia to participants.

On 1st December 2015, at 07.50 – 10.00 hrs the 1st fishing operation was started by Bottom Trawl. With speed of ship 3.5 kts in the depth of 30 - 33 m. This fishing operation was caught amount 145 kgs of fish to species identification and measure. The kinds of fish such as Snapper (*Lutjanus russelli* and *Lutjanus vitta*), Yellowtail Scad (*Atule mate*), Barracuda (*Sphyraena jello*), Painted Sweetlips (*Diagramma picta*), Golden Trevally (*Gnathanodon speciosus*), Rabbitfish (*Siganus janus* and *Siganus canaliculatus*), Fanbellied Leatherjacket (*Monacanthus chinensis*), Goatfish (*Upenes tragula* and *Upenes sundaicus*),

Trumpeterfish (*Terapon theraps*) Squid (*Photololigo duvaucelii*), Cuttlefish (*Sepia pharaonis*), Cat shark (*Chiloscyllium* sp.) and others. At 12.50 – 15.10 hrs the 2nd fishing operation was started by Bottom Trawl. With speed of ship 3.3 kts in the depth of 30 - 35 m. This fishing operation was caught amount 10 kgs of fish to species identification and measure. The kinds of fish such as Fanbellied Leatherjacket (*Monacanthus chinensis*), Goatfish (*Upenes tragula* and *Upenes sundaicus*), Squid (*Photololigo duvaucelii*), Cuttlefish (*Sepia pharaonis*), and others. In the evening, at 18.00 – 19.00 hrs has a summary for longline observer activities in practice and the training in Japan by Dr. Osamu Abe to participants.

On 2nd December 2015, at 05.00 – 10.00 hrs. Tuna Longline was to operate by total number is eighteen baskets, six branch lines per basket and bait is Bigeye Scad. Shooting speed 4 kts in the depth of 40 m. This fishing operation no fish to species identification and measure because of many fishing boats to operated fishing in this area. After that the ship was left fishing ground to pilot bar for anchorage.

On 3rd December 2015, at 08.00 hrs M.V.SEAFFDEC2 was alongside SEAFFDEC/TD's pier and the 20 participants disembarked the ship.

Result

This training, all participants have knowledge and experiences not only Fishing operation, Radio communication onboard, Navigation and seamanship. But also data recording method such as type of fishing gear, measuring mesh size and fish data collection. All of knowledge and experiences obtained by participants during shipboard training is suitable for observer onboard program according to RFMOs model course.

The DOF and SEAFFDEC/TD will co-operate to establish the observer onboard program for the next generation and the observer onboard of this pilot project will be a trainer to support in the next program. The way of forward the observer onboard can be reduced the IUU fishing to the management and sustainable fisheries.