

The 8th Coordination Committee Meeting on the
Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices including
Combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing
in the Southeast Asia Region

Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam
17 - 19 November 2015

Summary Report

Opening Session

The 8th Regional Plan of Action to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices including Combating IUU Fishing in the Southeast Asia Region (RPOA-IUU) Coordination Committee Meeting was attended by 9 participating countries (Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam). Papua New Guinea and Timor Leste were unable to attend the meeting. The Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre (SEAFDEC) also attended the meeting as an Advisory Body to the RPOA-IUU.. The list of participating countries at the RPOA-IUU Coordination Committee Meeting are shown at Annex 1. The list of participants who attended the meeting is at Annex 2.

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Abdul Halidi Mohd. Salleh, Acting Director, Department of Fisheries, Brunei Darussalam and co-chaired by Mr. Kieran Macdonell, Director of Fisheries Regulation and Governance, Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, Australia.

Mr. Abdur Rouf Sam, Executive Secretary of Directorate General of Surveillance for Marine and Fisheries Resources, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Republic of Indonesia, delivered welcoming remarks on behalf of the RPOA-IUU Secretariat. He reminded delegates to be aware that the increase of the world's population leads to an increase of demand for fisheries products, as fish is a key source of protein and important for food security. Mr. Abdur Rouf Sam stated that the region faces numerous challenges caused by IUU fishing and related activities, including profound impacts on fish stocks and the environment, fishers' livelihoods, and marine-coastal communities.

Mr. Abdur Rouf Sam emphasized the commitment to continue support for the work of the RPOA-IUU Secretariat. He also mentioned that implementation of sustainable fisheries management practices and combating IUU fishing are essential to ensure continuous supply of fishery products in the region.

Mr. Kieran Macdonell welcomed all participants to the meeting and emphasized the importance of this opportunity to discuss what actions have been undertaken in the past year and to plan for the year ahead.

The meeting was declared opened by the guest of honor, Mr. Haji Khairuddin Bin Abdul Hamid, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism, Brunei Darussalam. Mr Haji Kharuddin conveyed a very warm welcome to all delegates. He indicated it was indeed an honor for Brunei Darussalam to host the 8th RPOA-IUU Coordination Committee Meeting.

He stated that Brunei Darussalam had launched several initiatives to combat IUU fishing, such as the Declaration of Maritime Protected Areas, the National Plan of Action to combat IUU Fishing in 2011, the 2013 declaration of banning of catching of shark and the importation of any of its product, and the launch of the Coral Conservation, Awareness, Rehabilitation and Enrichment (C.A.R.E) program. He highlighted the main objective of the establishment of the RPOA-IUU which is to identify the issues, needs and gaps to combat IUU fishing in the respected areas. He acknowledged that the meeting provided a good opportunity to harmonize the initiatives on combating and also containing the damaging impacts of IUU Fishing in the marine environment by the development of the RPOA-IUU work plan 2015-2016, and through revisiting the 2014-2015 work plan.

The full text of Mr Haji Khairuddin's speech is in Annex 3.

1. Introduction and Adoption of the Agenda and Arrangement of the Meeting

The draft agenda was adopted.

1.1. Background of the meeting

Mr. Kieran Macdonell delivered a brief introduction and outlined the purpose of the meeting.

1.2. Regional outlook and priorities

2. Presentation of Reports

2.1. Reports of key messages and outcomes

a. RPOA-IUU-IUU Secretariat

Mr. Rochman Nurhakim from the RPOA-IUU Secretariat, presented the RPOA-IUU Secretariat report. He reminded participants of the core essence of the RPOA-IUU endorsed in May 2007 in Bali. The Secretariat highlighted the progress of (i) the FAO Global Record, (ii) Terms of Reference of Third Parties attending RPOA-IUU CCM, (iii) The 'Genuine Link'-The Vessel and Flag State, (iv) IUU Vessel List, and (v) the RPOA-IUU MCS Communication Procedure.

The RPOA-IUU Secretariat also proposed ways to improve the RPOA-IUU Secretariat, such as: (i) proposing for the RPOA-IUU Coordination Committee to appoint 1 (one) MCS-IUU Specialist, (ii) the need to consider an IUU Abatement Specialist/Liaison Officer in the RPOA-IUU Secretariat, (iii) the need to discuss a mechanism to secure funding, and (iv) the need to discuss the period and designation of RPOA-IUU participating countries to serve as RPOA-IUU-IUU Secretariat.

Mr Rochman Nurhakim also informed delegates about upcoming events:

- The 1st Regional Workshop on IUU Fishing and Sustainable Fisheries Exercise on 1 December 2015 held in Manado-Indonesia;
- The 5th Global Fisheries Enforcement Training Workshop in 7-11 March 2016 held in New Zealand.

The RPOA-IUU Secretariat encouraged member countries to participate in the events.

b. RPOA-IUU Participating Countries

The RPOA-IUU participating countries presented their report based on the RPOA-IUU country report template. They reported the progress of implementating the 2014-15 workplan that are grouped under the following key activities:(1) Current resource and management situation in the region; (2) implementation of international and regional instrument; (3) role of regional and multilateral organizations; (4) coastal state responsibilities; (5) flag state responsibilities; (6) port state measures; (7) regional market measures; (8) regional capacity building; (9) strengthening MCS system; (10) transshipment at sea and (11) implementation. Overall, key activities included:

- The commitment and collaboration among RPOA-IUU participating countries in combating IUU Fishing;
- Continued engagement and strengthening of regional/international cooperation, including development of mechanisms of information exchange to combat IUU Fishing;
- Development and implementation of National Plan of Action-IUU Fishing;
- Development of the legal, administrative and policy frameworks consistent with international instruments.

The country presentations are in Annex 4.

2.2. RPOA-IUU MCS Sub-Regional Groups

The three subregional MCS groups reported on their activities and key issues. The presentations appear as at Annex 5.

- a. Arafura–Timor Seas (Australia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Timor Leste)
Mr. Andrew Browne, Acting Manager, International Compliance Operations, AFMA, presented the progress of the Sub Group. He reported that cooperative activity to combat IUU fishing focused on sharing information, co-operative operations and co-operative intelligence gathering.

The 2015 work plan involved participating countries pursuing flag state responsibility; consisting of (i) representations to be made to flag states on identified IUU activity (where the coastal state is unable to take action), (ii) continue sharing information (sightings/license status) and (iii) collate evidence packs where IUU fishing is identified. Cooperative Operations have also been a focus of the 2015 work plan.

The sub regional group shared data and information gathered by aerial surveillance, such as the significant use of Fish Aggregation Devices.

The 6th meeting of the Subregional Arafura-Timor Seas will be held in the first quarter of 2016 in Timor Leste.

- b. Gulf of Thailand (Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Malaysia)

Mr. Kamonpan Awaiwanont, Chief of Fishing Ground Development Unit, Marine Fisheries Research and Development Division, Department of Fisheries, Thailand, presented the progress of the sub group Gulf. He presented the key issues discussed at the 5th Meeting of Gulf of Thailand which included:

- Progress of Implementation of the Programs related to Trans-Boundary Stock, Habitat Management, and Sub-Regional Cooperation;
- Promotion for Effective Management of Fishing Capacity and Reduce Illegal and Destructive (Combat IUU) Fishing in the Gulf Of Thailand;
- Discussion on directions and recommendations on Common Approaches towards Strengthened and Expanded Cooperation in the Gulf Of Thailand – Action/Activity Plan for Year 2016.

The 6th meeting of the Subregional Gulf of Thailand will be held in 2016 in Thailand.

- c. Southern and Eastern Area of the South China Sea and Sulu-Sulawesi Seas (Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, and the Philippines)

Mr. Ahmad Hazizi Aziz, Head of Division, Department of Fisheries Malaysia, reported the outcome of the 6th subregional meeting on Southern and Eastern Area of the South China Sea and Sulu-Sulawesi Seas which was held in Yogyakarta-Indonesia, 22-23 April 2015. The meeting agreed to the simplified subregional workplan matrix which was developed by the MCS and Fishery Resource Management technical working group (TWG).

The next meeting will be held in Philippines in the third quarter of 2016.

2.3. RPOA-IUU Advisory Bodies/partners:

SEAFDEC

Mr. Somboon Siriraksophon, Policy and Program Coordinator, SEAFDEC, spoke about the 5 (five) major forms of IUU fishing activities occurring in the Southeast Asian region, as identified by ASEAN Member States:

- Illegal fishing activities within a country;
- Landing of Catch Across Borders;
- Poaching in Other Countries's EEZ;
- Illegal Fishing and Trading Practices of Live Reef Food Fish, Ornamentals, and EAS;
- IUU Fishing in High Seas & RFMO Areas.

Mr Siriraksophon shared with the meeting management tools and guidelines to combat IUU fishing in the ASEAN region which were developed through the Country Consultations and AMS' expert meetings. The initiatives are as follows:

- Development of Guidelines to prevent the entry of fish and fishery products from IUU activities to the supply chain,
- Establishment of RFVR for Vessels of 24 m in length & over,
- Development of an ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme,
- Implementation of the Port State Measures for ASEAN Region

In addition, many SEAFDEC programs provide the support to strengthen the MCS network, development of the Regional Plan of Action for managing fishing capacity, and bilateral dialogue for understanding and exchanging information on legal frameworks to support combating IUU fishing.

SEAFDEC's presentation is in Annex 6.

2.4. Observers

a. Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)

The representative from Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, Ms. Sarah Lenel, Fishery Monitoring and Compliance Manager, expressed her appreciation for the invitation to attend as observer at the 8th RPOA-IUU Coordination Committee Meeting.

Ms Lenel advised that in October this year, CCAMLR concluded its 34th Annual Meeting. During the meeting, CCAMLR took the opportunity to commend Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia for their action in relation to CCAMLR IUU-Listed Vessels.

Ms Lenel advised that all vessels highlighted in the RPOA-IUU Secretariat presentation target Toothfish in the CCAMLR Convention Area. These vessels have been operating for over a decade and pose a significant threat to CCAMLR's

conservation objectives and undermine the science used to manage CCAMLR's fisheries.

Ms Lenel said that the various actions taken by RPOA-IUU-IUU participating countries, CCAMLR members, Interpol, and Sea Shepherd have made it a very difficult year for illegal IUU fishing activities in the CCAMLR fishing areas.

CCAMLR implements a CDS for Toothfish that monitors the trade of Toothfish. CCAMLR seeks Non-contracting parties' (NCP) cooperation in the voluntary implementation of the CDS. CCAMLR has adopted an NCP engagement strategy to improve this cooperation. In 2016, CCAMLR will implement the NCP engagement strategy and focus on NCPs in Southeast Asia.

CCAMLR's CDS trade data has identified Malaysia, Viet Nam, Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand as countries importing a significant amount of Toothfish. CCAMLR intends to support participants from these countries to undertake a workshop to learn more about CCAMLR and the CDS. Australia and Singapore voiced their support to this workshop.

b. Greenpeace

Mr. Ephraim Batungbacal, Regional Research Coordinator, Greenpeace, presented Greenpeace's global ocean objectives of establishing a global network of marine reserves covering 40% of the world's ocean. Mr. Batungbacal raised concerns about transparency, traceability, and transshipment in relation to IUU fishing. He shared Greenpeace's findings on illegal fishing in the high seas and informed RPOA-IUU participating countries about Greenpeace's IUU Blacklist. He also discussed salient points about Greenpeace's new "Tuna cannery ranking" which provided consumers information on which canned tunas are sustainably sourced.

c. United States International Development for Regional USAID RDMA

The representative from USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia, Mr. Renerio Acosta, Regional Environment Program Advisor, presented the 5 year Ocean and Fisheries Partnership Activity. He said that the Goal of the program was to increase the ability of regional fishery organizations to conserve marine biodiversity and combat IUU fishing in the Asia Pacific region.

He highlighted the specific objective of the Ocean and Fisheries Partnership:

- Support the development a financially sustainable regional catch documentation and traceability system;
- Strengthen capacity of regional organizations to conserve marine biodiversity;
- Enhance public-private partnerships to combat IUU fishing and promote sustainable fisheries.

d. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

Mr. John F. Barylsky, Assistant Special Agent In Charge, presented the roles and responsibilities of supporting agencies and directs clear coordination relationships to include operational coordination requirements enabling the U.S. Government to act quickly and decisively to counter maritime threats. He informed to the meeting members on the enforcement authority of United States on fisheries jurisdiction, which consist of:

- Maritime Domain Awareness;
- Environmental Analysis;
- Intelligence Analysis.
- Challenges with the seizure off FFV illegally fishing within the U.S. EEZ

He highlighted the maritime operational threat response of NOAA OLE reference a Taiwanese flagged fishing vessel namely FFV. TE HUNG FA, which was escorted into the port of Saipan by the USCG for suspected IUU fisheries violations within the U.S. EEZ of CNMI.

The Observers' presentations are in Annex 7.

3. RPOA-IUU Issues: for consideration/endorsement

Progress activities related to FAO Global Record

The Secretariat will distribute the Recommendation for Global Record Development matrix to RPOA-IUU countries inter-sessionally.

4. 2014-2015 RPOA-IUU Work Plan – Progress and further priorities

The meeting reviewed progress of the implementation of the 2014-15 work plan. The outcome of this discussion is in Annex 8.

5. Development of the 2015 – 2016 RPOA-IUU Work Plan

Building on the progress of the 2014-2015 RPOA-IUU Work plan, the meeting identified priorities for 2015-2016. The RPOA-IUU-IUU Workplan 2015-2016 endorsed by the Representative RPOA-IUU-IUU Coordination Committee is in Annex 9.

6. Other business

There was brief discussion around the protocol for sharing information. All countries were encouraged to share information, not only on sightings of IUU vessels but also of outcomes of any actions, lesson learnt, and broader improvements in fisheries management of interest to other member countries.

The Secretariat introduced a proposal to improve the capacity of Secretariat services and sought proposals of MCS specialists from each country. It was agreed that the Secretariat would develop a more detailed proposal on the rationale for the changes and proposed fundings, and will circulate to RPOA-IUU members out of session.

The Secretariat agreed to revise the diagram outlining the communication procedure and will provide it to members out of session for comment.

Members supported the development of a resolution on the commitment to take action against stateless vessels. Australia agreed to develop a draft resolution and provide to the secretariat for circulation out of session.

7. Next Meeting

The meeting was unable to decide on the date and venue of the next Coordination Committee meeting in 2016. The Secretariat will send an official letter to the government of Thailand inviting them to host the next meeting.

Closing Session

Co-chairs delivered their closing remarks and closed the meeting.