

# 2016 JOINT ASEAN-SEAFDEC DECLARATION ON REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR COMBATING ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED FISHING AND ENHANCING THE COMPETITIVENESS OF ASEAN FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS

*Adopted in Bangkok, Thailand on 3 August 2016*

**WE, the Senior Officials of ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries met on the occasion of the “High-level Consultation on Regional Cooperation in Sustainable Fisheries Development Towards the ASEAN Economic Community: Combating IUU Fishing and Enhancing the Competitiveness of ASEAN Fish and Fishery Products,” in Bangkok, Thailand on 3 August 2016;**

**Recognizing** the provisions in international instruments such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS, 1982), Agenda 21, which was adopted at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, 1992), the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF, 1995), and the Regional Plan of Action to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices including Combating IUU Fishing in the Region (RPOA-IUU, 2007);

**Guided** by the ASEAN Charter, which aims to ensure sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations and to place the well-being, livelihood and welfare of the people at the center of the ASEAN community building process;

**Bearing in mind** that fisheries in the Southeast Asian region had developed rapidly during the last decade contributing significantly to the improved economy and food security of the region, however, IUU fishing is a serious concern and threatens the sustainability of the region’s fisheries management and conservation measures, fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems, as well as economic viability and food security;

**Aware of** the existing national, regional and international initiatives in combating IUU fishing undertaken by the ASEAN Member States (AMSs), relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), and other regional and international organizations;

**Recalling** the Resolution and Plan of Action on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region adopted by the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for fisheries during the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Conference on Sustainable Fisheries for Food Security for the ASEAN Region Towards 2020 “Fish for the People 2020: Adaptation to a Changing Environment” held in June 2011;

**Conscious of** the need to meet food safety and quality requirements; such as through implementing the ASEAN Guidelines for the Use of Chemicals in Aquaculture and Measures to Eliminate the Use of Harmful Chemicals, ASEAN Good Aquaculture Practice (GAqP), ASEAN Shrimp GAP, and continue developing ASEAN standards in line with relevant regional and international instruments such as the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Agreement of Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures;

**Taking into consideration** the importance of working conditions of labor in fisheries sector as outlined in the International Labour Organization (ILO), International Maritime Organization (IMO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers;

**HEREBY DECLARE OUR INTENT**, without prejudice to the sovereign rights, obligations, and responsibilities of ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries under relevant international laws and

arrangements, to combat IUU fishing in the Southeast Asian region and enhance the competitiveness of ASEAN fish and fishery products by:

1. Strengthening Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) programs under national laws and regulations for combating IUU fishing and enhancing cooperation among relevant national agencies within the country for effective implementation of laws and regulations for combating IUU fishing;
2. Intensifying capacity building and awareness-raising programs, including information, education and communication campaigns;
3. Enhancing traceability of fish and fishery products from capture fisheries through the implementation of the “ASEAN Guidelines for Preventing the Entry of Fish and Fishery Products from IUU Fishing Activities into the Supply Chain,” and “ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme for Marine Capture Fisheries”;
4. Enhancing traceability of aquaculture products, through the implementation of all ASEAN GAPs with certification scheme based on regulations of respective countries, and traceability systems that are harmonized with those of major importing countries;
5. Managing fishing capacity with a view to balance fishing efforts taking into account the declining status of the fishery resources in the Southeast Asian region, and establishing conservation measures based on scientific evidence;
6. Promoting the implementation of port State measures through enhanced inter-agencies and regional cooperation in preventing the landing of fish and fishery products from IUU fishing activities from all foreign fishing vessels, and encouraging the use of the “Regional Fishing Vessels Record (RFVR)”;
7. Enhancing regional cooperation in managing trans-boundary fisheries resources through regional, sub-regional, and bilateral arrangements in combating IUU fishing, particularly poaching by fishing vessels, transshipment and transportation of fish and fishery products across borders of respective countries;
8. Regulating the quality and safety of ASEAN fish and fishery products all throughout the supply chain to meet standards and market requirements as well as acceptability by importing countries, and development and promotion of ASEAN seal of excellence/label;
9. Addressing issues on labor (safe, legal and equitable practices) in the fisheries sector in the Southeast Asian region through strengthened cooperation among relevant national agencies within the country as well as establishing regional, sub-regional and bilateral cooperation and collaboration via relevant ASEAN platforms, and helping to support the development and implementation of relevant labor guidelines for the fisheries sector;
10. Enhancing close collaboration between the AMSs and relevant RFMOs in combating IUU fishing; and
11. Undertaking collective efforts in developing preventive and supportive measures to strengthen rehabilitation of resources and recovery of fish stocks to mitigate the impacts of IUU fishing.

## **WE HEREBY DECLARE AND ENCOURAGE THAT**

This Joint ASEAN-SEAFDEC Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Combating IUU Fishing and Enhancing the Competitiveness of ASEAN Fish and Fishery Products be implemented by the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Member Countries; and that AMSs and SEAFDEC with support from donors and collaborating partners, strengthen their efforts to implement programs to combat IUU fishing and enhancing the competitiveness of ASEAN fish and fishery products.

This Joint Declaration is adopted on 3 August 2016. In attendance during the adoption are:

- 1) *Pg. Kamalrudzaman bin Pg. Haji Md Ishak*, Senior Special Duties Officer, Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism, Brunei Darussalam
- 2) *Dr. Kao Sochivi*, Deputy Director General, Fisheries Administration, Kingdom of Cambodia
- 3) *Dr. Achmad Poernomo*, Senior Advisor to the Minister for Public Policy, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Republic of Indonesia
- 4) *Mr. Hideki Moronuki*, Senior Fisheries Negotiator, Fisheries Agency, Japan
- 5) *Mr. Xaypladeth Choulamany*, Director General, Department of Planning and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao People's Democratic Republic
- 6) *Datuk Hj. Ismail bin Abu Hassan*, Director General, Department of Fisheries, Malaysia
- 7) *Mr. Khin Maung Maw*, Director General, Department of Fisheries, Republic of the Union of Myanmar
- 8) *Mr. Sammy A. Malvas*, Regional Director, Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, Republic of the Philippines
- 9) *Dr. Tan Lee Kim*, Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Corporate and Technology), Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority, Republic of Singapore
- 10) *Dr. Theerapat Prayurasiddhi*, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Kingdom of Thailand
- 11) *Mrs. Nguyen Thi Trang Nhung*, Deputy Director, Department of Science, Technology and International Cooperation, Fisheries Administration, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam