



The Working Groups Meeting to Follow-up Activities on Joint Program on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas

30th - 31st March 2017

Bangkok, Thailand

Provisional Prospectus

I. Introduction

During the 44th Meeting and the 45th Meeting of the SEAFDEC Council, SEAFDEC has been requested to develop the framework to facilitate the collaborative tuna research activities in Southeast Asia Waters in order to support the sustainable tuna utilization of SEAFDEC Member Countries. With this regards, SEAFDEC Training Department (TD), Marine Fishery Resources Development and Management Department (MFRDMD) and Secretariat (SEC) has jointly organized the Joint Research Program on Tuna Resources in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas (SSSs) since year 2013. The “Sub-regional Technical Meeting for Development of Joint Research Program for Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas” was the first activities had been collaboratively organized in Malaysia, in August 2013. This enabled SEAFDEC to come up with the Framework for Joint Research Program on Tuna Resources in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas (SSSs). To come up with concrete program arrangement, TD in collaboration with the MFRDMD and SEC has been arranging a series of meeting with financial and technical support of the Japanese Trust Fund Program under the project entitled “Offshore Fisheries Resources Exploration in Southeast Asia”, to facilitate the joint research on tuna fisheries in SSSs.

The overall goal of the joint research program is to understand status and trend of tuna fisheries in SSSs through collaborative research activities by the three SEAFDEC Member Countries surrounding the SSSs, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. The Meeting in 2013 also agreed that the joint program should focus on three target species, *i.e.* Yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), Bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*), and Skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*).

Under this joint research program, main activities include:

1. Review of the catch and efforts, biological data/information on the tuna harvested in SSSs
2. Primary data collection (tissue samples for genetic analysis; catch-effort and biological data; and fishing ground profiling)
3. Tuna stock assessment
4. Determination of tuna spawning grounds
5. Assessment the use of FADs in tuna fisheries in SSSs
6. Organization of scientific committee meeting

To come up with necessary arrangements for the joint research, "Sub-regional Technical Working Group Meeting of SEAFDEC Joint Program for Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas" and the “Sub-regional Technical Meeting for Finalizing Work Plan of activities of Joint Program on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas” was held in Malaysia, in May and August 2014. These meetings agreed on Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the four (4) research topics including, Stock Assessment of Tuna Fisheries Resources in SSSs, Tuna Spawning Ground, Study on FADs,

Distribution, and Genetic Study for Tuna Resources. The final cruise plan of M.V.SEAFFDEC2 survey in SSSs, and timeframe of activities were also concluded during the August Meeting in 2014.

After the first cruise survey of M.V.SEAFFDEC2 in SSSs, from 17th October to 9th December 2014, “Working Groups Meeting and Technical Meeting Joint Research Program on Tuna Resources in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas” was held in Thailand from 10th to 11th February 2015. At this meeting, Member of Working Group had reviewed the outcome of the first cruise survey of M.V.SEAFFDEC2 in SSSs and finalized, estimated cost of the second cruise plan, scheduled from 20th April to 12th May 2015. Member of Working Group had also shared information on the methodology for regional stock assessment with historical data.

As the agreement from the Working Groups Meeting and Technical Meeting in February 2015, “The Second Working Groups Meeting and Technical Meeting on Joint Program on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas” was convened in Davao, the Philippines from 25th to 27th August 2015. Through the Meeting, participants reviewed the results of the second cruise survey of M.V.SEAFFDEC2, shared updates of the progress of the four research topics, and provided technical support for stock assessment by the project participating countries. The meeting also agreed that the Technical Meeting should be convened for updates progress of all four research topics. In addition the meeting discussed the feasibility to expand joint program after the research work on tuna resources in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas (SSSs) finish in year 2016.

With reference to the Meeting agreement, TD, in collaboration SEC convenes the Working Groups Meeting to Follow-up Activities on Joint Program on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas, in Bangkok, Thailand from 30th to 31st March 2017, with financial and technical support of the Japanese Trust Fund. This meeting aims to update the progress of the four research topics, seeking for the solutions on the hindrance of data analysis, and discussion on the feasibility to continue Joint Program on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas during year 2017-2019.

II. Objectives

1. Updating and adopting the Scientific Report entitles Stock Assessments of yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*) and skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas by ASPIC*
2. Updating the result and progress of project implementation on study;
 - a. Tuna spawning ground in SSSs
 - b. Tuna genetic study
 - c. Distribution of Fish aggregating devices (FADs) around SSSs
 - d. Oceanographic parameter around SSSs
 - e. Fisheries abundance by using hydroacoustic equipment
3. Discussion and recommendation on the hindrance of the data analysis to support the tuna research in SSSs
4. Discussion on the feasibility and potential future activity(s) to carry on Joint Program on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas, during year 2017-2019

III. Expected outputs

1. Adoption of the Scientific Report entitles Stock Assessments of yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*) and skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas by ASPIC*
2. Progress report on the study and progress of project implementation on study;
 - a. Tuna spawning ground in SSSs
 - b. Tuna genetic research study
 - c. Distribution of Fish aggregating devices (FADs) around SSSs
 - d. Oceanographic parameter around SSSs
 - e. Fisheries abundance by using hydroacoustic equipment
3. Direction and solution of the hindrance of data analysis to support the tuna research in SSSs, and
4. Future activity of Joint Program on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas during year 2017-2019.

IV. Technical preparations

1. Prior to the workshop
 - Chief scientist of the each study topic will prepare the summary report and presentation on progress update or achievement.
 - Chief scientist of stock assessment of each tuna species prepare comment on Report entitles Stock Assessments of yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*) and skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas by ASPIC*, provided by Dr. Tsutomu Nishida. If none of comments report will be adopted during the meeting then SEAFDEC will prepare for publication and distribution.
 - Dr. Tsutomu Nishida kindly prepare the updates the comparisons of stock statuses (Yellowfin, Skipjack and Bigeye tuna) between the results in SSS and the most updated results in WCPFC to discuss the management issue.
 - SEAFDEC will prepare the report of the survey by M.V. SEAFDEC2 research cruise in 2014 and 2015 for adopting.
 - SEAFDEC will prepare the update of SEAFDEC project Neritic Tunas Stock Assessment in the Southeast Asian Waters.
 - SEAFDEC will requests Dr. Tsutomu Nishida to prepare the update status and trend of skipjack tuna resources in Japan and possibility of skipjack resources to be impacted by the utilization of skipjack tuna in SSSs
2. During the workshop
 - Adopting on the Scientific Report entitles Stock Assessments of yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*) and skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas by ASPIC* reported by Dr. Tsutomu Nishida and prepares the comments to further publication.
 - Dr. Tsutomu Nishida updates the comparisons of stock statuses (Yellowfin, Skipjack and Bigeye tuna) between the results in SSS and the most updated results in WCPFC to discuss the management issue.
 - Chief scientist of the each study topic will present update or achievement of the research on

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| 1. Stock assessment on Bigeye tuna | Mr. Suwarso Mars (Indonesia) |
| 2. Stock assessment on Skipjack tuna | Mr. Noel Barut (Philippines) |
| 3. Stock assessment on Yellowfin tuna | Mr. Hj Samsudin bin Basir (Malaysia) |
| 4. Tuna spawning ground | Mr. Zulkifli bin Talib (Malaysia) |
| 5. Tuna genetic | Dr. Mudjekeewis D. Santos (Philippines) |
| 6. FADs | Mr. Rafael Rasmical or
Mr. Napoleon Lamarca (Philippines) |
| 7. Oceanographic parameter around SSSs | Mr. Sukchai Anupapboon |
| 8. Fisheries abundance by using hydroacoustic equipment | Mr. Raja Bidin Raja Hassan |
- SEAFDEC will facilitate for future activity (s) to implement the Joint Program on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas.
 - Representative of SEAFDEC will present the update of project Neritic Tunas Stock Assessment in the Southeast Asian Waters and possible activities in alignment with project Joint Program on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas
 - Representative from Project USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership will present the project background and activities on tuna fisheries in SSSs.
 - Dr. Tsutomu Nishida will kindly present the situation of skipjack resources in Japan and possibility of skipjack resources to be impacted by the utilization of skipjack tuna in SSSs
 - Discussion on the possible future activity(s) to implement the Joint Program on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas.

V. Date and venue

30th – 31st March 2017, Bangkok, Thailand

VI. Tentative Agenda

1. Opening Session
2. Election of Chairperson
3. Introduction and adoption of the agenda by SEAFDEC/TD
4. Adopting on the Scientific Report entitles Stock Assessments of yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*) and skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas by ASPIC* reported by Dr. Tsutomu Nishida and prepares the comments to further publication.
5. Updated comparisons of stock statuses (Yellowfin, Skipjack and Bigeye tuna) between our results in SSS and the most updated results in WCPFC to discuss the management issue
6. Presentation on progress, update or achievement of the research and discussion on the hindrance of data analysis to support the tuna research in SSSs
 1. Stock assessment on bigeye tuna Mr. Suwarso Mars (Indonesia)
 2. Stock assessment on skipjack tuna Mr. Noel Barut (Philippines)
 3. Stock assessment on yellowfin tuna Mr. Hj Samsudin bin Basir (Malaysia)

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| 4. Tuna spawning ground | Mr. Zulkifli bin Talib (Malaysia) |
| 5. Tuna genetic | Dr. Mudjekeewis D. Santos (Philippines) |
| 6. FADs | Mr. Rafael Rasmical or
Mr. Napoleon Lamarca (Philippines) |
| 7. Oceanographic parameter around SSSs | Mr. Sukchai Anupapboon |
| 8. Fisheries abundance by using hydroacoustic equipment | Mr. Raja Bidin Raja Hassan |
| 9. Others | |
7. Consideration of Joint Tuna Research activities in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas from 2017 to 2019
1. Update of project Neritic Tunas Stock Assessment in the Southeast Asian Waters and possible activities in alignment with project Joint Program on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas
 2. Representative from Project USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership will present the project background and activities on tuna fisheries in SSSs.
 3. Situation of skipjack resources in Japan and possibility of skipjack resources to be impacted by the utilization of skipjack tuna in SSSs
 4. Discussion and conclusion on the possible future activity(s) to implement the Joint Program on Tuna Research in Sulu and Sulawesi Seas from 2017 onwards
8. Others
9. Conclusion
10. Closing

Participants and Resource Persons:

Indonesia	Dr. Ali Suman (Indonesia) Mr. Suwarso Mas (Indonesia)
Malaysia	Mr. Hj Samsudin bin Basir (Malaysia) Mr. Zulkifli bin Talib (Malaysia)
Philippines	Mr. Noel Barut (Philippines) Mr. Rafael Rasmical (Philippines) Dr. Mudjekeewis D. Santos
SEAFDEC Secretariat	Dr. Kom Silapajarn Dr. Kaoru Ishii Mr. Isao Koya Mr. Tetsuya Kawashima Dr. Taweekiet Amornpiyakrit
SEAFDEC/MFRDMD	Mr. Raja Bidin Raja Hassan Dr. Osamu Abe
SEAFDEC/TD	Mr. Isara Chanrachkij Mr. Sukchai Arnupapboon Ms. Pontipa Luadnakrob

	Mr. Rakkiet Punsri
	Mr. Supapong Pattarapongpan
	Ms. Siriporn Pangsorn
	Fishing gear technologist (To be decide)
Observer	Mr. Ifan Ariansyach (RFPN for Indonesia)
	Mr. Napoleon Larmarca (RFPN for Philippines)
Administrative	Ms. Nathacha Sornvaree

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