



PROVISIONAL PROSPECTUS

Regional Workshop on Information Exchange on Monitoring Control and Surveillance of Combating IUU Fishing

24–26 November 2025

Bangkok, Thailand

Global trade in food commodities plays an essential role in supporting livelihoods, enhancing food security, and strengthening national economies. Among these commodities, fish and fishery products are some of the most widely traded, especially for developing countries that rely heavily on this sector for employment, income, and exports. In 2022, global trade in fishery products reached 70 million tons, which accounted for 38 percent of total fisheries and aquaculture production, with an estimated value of USD 195 billion (FAO, 2024). This trend reflects the rising global demand for aquatic products and the growing complexity of international fish supply chains.

However, fisheries play a crucial role in both local and global economies, yet their sustainability is increasingly threatened by overfishing, resource depletion, and governance challenges. Among these pressures, Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing remains one of the most persistent and critical issues, undermining fisheries management, depleting fish stocks, and damaging marine ecosystems. Operating outside legal frameworks, IUU activities distort markets, disadvantage lawful fishers, and often evade detection due to limited transparency and traceability in supply chains. The problem is particularly acute in Southeast Asia, where insufficient management and weak Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS) exacerbate the pressure on fishery resources. Addressing IUU fishing requires urgent and transparent action, including stricter regulation of fishing vessels, mitigation of overcapacity, and the implementation of effective rights-based management systems.

One of the key strategies for addressing IUU fishing is strengthening MCS to ensure effective enforcement and sustainable fisheries management. Within this framework, the exchange of timely and accurate information is crucial, as it enhances the detection of illegal activities, supports cross-border coordination, and improves the overall efficiency of monitoring efforts. Strengthening Information Exchange on MCS helps close governance gaps, facilitates collective action, and is essential for safeguarding marine resources in the long term.

Recognizing the importance of regional collaboration, the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), in partnership with the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organization (BOBP-IGO) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), will implement a regional project titled Sustainable Management of Fisheries, Marine Living Resources and Their Habitats in the Bay of Bengal Region for the Benefit of the Coastal States and Communities, also known as BOBLME II. The project is led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and will be implemented in seven countries, including Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Its overarching objective is to promote the sustainable management of fisheries, marine living resources, and their associated habitats in the Bay of Bengal with the aim of reducing environmental pressures and improving ecosystem health for the benefit of Coastal States and communities. This goal will be pursued through five interrelated components covering sustainable fisheries management, which includes combating IUU fishing, restoration and conservation of critical marine habitats and biodiversity, management of coastal and marine pollution to improve ecosystem health, improved livelihoods and resilience of BOBLME communities, and the establishment of a regional mechanism for planning, coordination, and monitoring of BOBLME. As the Executing Agency, SEAFDEC will coordinate activities in Southeast Asia, providing technical guidance and capacity building in fisheries-

related areas under components one, three, and five. These activities will be implemented in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand from 2024 to 2028.

Therefore, to enhance regional cooperation and strengthen the effectiveness of MCS in combating IUU fishing, the Regional Workshop on Information Exchange on MCS of Combating IUU Fishing will be organized as a part of both projects. These workshops provide a dedicated platform for sharing timely and accurate information, improving coordination among participating countries, and facilitating joint efforts to detect and deter illegal fishing activities. By fostering collaboration and building technical capacity in the region, the initiative reinforces cooperative action among member countries and advances more effective measures against IUU fishing in the region.

OBJECTIVES

1. Facilitate the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and lessons learned on the implementation of MCS systems among participating countries of BOBLME II project.
2. Enhance regional collaboration in combating IUU fishing among participating countries of BOBLME II project.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

1. Updated understanding of current MCS implementation and practices relevant to combating IUU fishing among participating countries of BOBLME II project.
2. Enhanced mechanisms for sharing experiences and best practices on MCS at the regional level.
3. Strengthened coordination and communication to support future collaborative actions.

DATE AND VENUE

The workshop will be held from 24 to 26 November 2025, at the Best Western Nada Don Mueang Airport Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand.

PARTICIPANTS

- National Coordinator for the BOBLME II project and/or representative for Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand
- Representatives from Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia who are responsible for combating IUU fishing activities in the Andaman Sea area
- Representatives from Bangladesh, India, Maldives, and Sri Lanka who are responsible for combating IUU fishing activities
- SEAFDEC/TD
- BOBP-IGO

AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

24 November 2025 (Monday)

Time	Activities
0830-0900	Registration
0900-0930	Agenda 1: Opening ceremony session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement by FAO/RAP • Statement by BOBP-IGO • Opening remarks by SEAFDEC/TD Agenda 2: Introduction and objectives of the workshop/Adoption of the agenda
0930-1000	<i>Refreshment and group photo</i>
1000-1200	Agenda 3: Country presentations on current MCS implementation consist of current MCS implementation and enforcement measures, country strategies to combat IUU fishing, laws and regulations to support the implementation of MCS activities, key challenges, gaps, and needs for MCS implementation by participating countries (30 minutes per country) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangladesh • India • Indonesia • Malaysia
1200-1300	<i>Lunch</i>
1300-1430	Agenda 3: Country presentations on current MCS implementation (continue) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maldives • Sri Lanka • Thailand
1430-1500	<i>Refreshment</i>
1500-1600	Agenda 4: Prioritize nine priority areas for future action to combat IUU fishing in the Southeast Asia and support the implementation of MCS activities by SEAFDEC/TD
1800-2000	<i>Reception Dinner</i>

25 November 2025 (Tuesday)

Time	Activities
0900-1000	Agenda 5: Progress of implementation activities relevant to combat IUU fishing for the BOBLME II project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southeast Asia (by SEAFDEC) • Asia (by BOBP-IGO)
1000-1030	<i>Refreshment</i>
1030-1200	Agenda 6: Introduction of the development of a Unified Risk Assessment System for Neighboring Fishing Vessels as an innovative tool to combat IUU fishing
1200-1300	<i>Lunch</i>
1300-1600	Agenda 7: Group discussion on sharing information and coordination on MCS to combat IUU fishing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southeast Asia (by SEAFDEC) • South Asia (by BOBP-IGO)

26 November 2025 (Wednesday)

Time	Activities
0900-1000	Presentation of group discussion
1000-1030	<i>Refreshment</i>
1030-1200	Agenda 8: Discussion on future implementation activities relevant to combat IUU fishing for the BOBLME II project (for Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand) and BOB RPOA-IUU (for Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka)
1200-1330	<i>Lunch</i>
1330-1600	Agenda 9: Conclusion Agenda 10: Closing ceremony