

Report of the 21st Meeting of the Advisory Committee



INTEGRATED COASTAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

REPORT OF THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING
OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

12-13 February, 1997
Bangkok, Thailand

This document records the recommendations of the 21st Meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Bay of Bengal Programme for Coastal Fisheries Management (BOBP). The meeting was held 12-13 February, 1997 in Bangkok, Thailand.

The document also contains the annual reports of the projects that comprise the BOBP. These reports summarize the objectives of the projects and their current status; the work performed and the achievements during 1996, an evaluation of progress, and workplans for 1997.

The Advisory Committee is composed of member-countries, agencies funding BOBP projects, and the FAO. The Committee meets once a year by rotation in member-countries.

The Bay of Bengal Programme (BOBP) is a multi-agency regional fisheries programme that covers seven countries around the Bay of Bengal - Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Thailand. The Programme plays a catalytic and consultative role in developing coastal fisheries management in the Bay of Bengal, thereby helping improve the conditions of small-scale fisherfolk in member countries.

The BOBP is sponsored by the Governments of Denmark and Japan. The executing agency is the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations).

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**REPORT OF THE 21ST MEETING
OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE BAY OF BENGAL PROGRAMME
FOR COASTAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT**

OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The Advisory Committee of the Bay of Bengal Programme for Coastal Fisheries Management (BOBP) held its Twentyfirst Meeting on 12 - 13 February 1997, at FAO-RAPA, Bangkok, Thailand. A list of the participants is given in Appendix A.
2. The Meeting was formally inaugurated by Dr Soetatwo Hadiwigeno, Assistant Director-General and FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific.
3. The working session was opened on 12 February 1997 by the outgoing Chairman, Mr George Chong Chiaw Min, Head of Resources Management, Department of Fisheries, Malaysia.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

4. The Advisory Committee unanimously elected Dr Y S Yadava, Development Commissioner (Fisheries), Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, as its Chairman to hold office until the beginning of the next Meeting.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. The Advisory Committee adopted the Agenda shown in Appendix C. The documents made available to the Committee are listed in Appendix D.

COASTAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT (GCP/RAS/150/DEN & GCP/RAS/1S1/ JPN)

6. Fisheries management to be successful ideally needs to address the full cycle of activities from harvest to consumption in an integrated manner. However, the solutions to fisheries management problems may often lie outside of the fishery sector, such as in providing non-fishery income alternatives, promoting coastal aquaculture and environmental protection.
7. Policy-makers need to be made aware of the need for, benefits of and methods and approaches to fisheries management to enable and persuade them to guide and provide support to management efforts.

8. Given that coastal resources, particularly near-shore resources, are exploited close to if not beyond sustainable levels, an option for improving management of the fisheries worth considering is to wean away fishers through diversification of fisheries to tap un- and under-utilized species and through promotion of on-shore, non-fisheries income generating options.
9. Given the stagnation and decline in marine capture production, mariculture may help in increasing fish production and provide an eco-friendly alternative which would also reduce the pressure on coastal fisheries and protect coral reefs, provided the issues of wild capture of fingerlings and the environmental impacts of culture practices are addressed and rationally managed.
10. Representatives of NACA and SEAFDEC offered to cooperate and collaborate with BOBP and its Member Countries by providing technical assistance relating to improved management of coastal aquaculture and training, particularly to strengthen the extension capacity of fishery agencies.
11. Given the interactive nature of coastal activities, particularly fisheries and coastal aquaculture, there is need to assess environmental and social impacts of fisheries and aquaculture, which would then give direction to the development of more eco-friendly and rational management of coastal areas.
12. Fishery agencies in the region are facing constraints in trained human resources and find it difficult to cope with the needs of facilitating and enabling management. There is a need to strengthen the capacity of concerned agencies. In this connection, BOBP's involvement in the conduct of skill gaps analysis and training needs assessments in Member Countries is very relevant and important, to give direction to efforts to strengthen the capacities of fishery agencies in coastal fisheries management.
13. The variety of approaches and models of fisheries management being tested in pilot BOBP assisted exercises, if successful, could be extended and replicated with appropriate modifications to other parts of the Member Countries as well as to other countries, and efforts to document and share such learnings need to be taken.
14. In promoting and enabling community-based fisheries management there is a need to learn about management approaches, particularly user- and use-rights regimes and modalities, from successful examples such as in Japan.
15. In Sri Lanka there is also a need for technical assistance to enable development of technologies to breed and culture selected marine ornamental fish, to reduce the dependence of the sector on wild caught fish.
16. To facilitate national execution, and incorporation of government contributions to BOBP assisted activities into national/state budgets, BOBP workplans and budgets need to be developed well ahead of time to meet the procedural deadlines of different member countries. BOBP may wish to submit two-year indicative workplans and budgets to Advisory Committee Meetings, which would then give Member Countries sufficient lead time to meet procedural deadlines.

17. While the third phase of BOBP was approved to begin in May 1994, the Project became operational only in early 1995 with the recruitment of its international staff, and as such the five-year project duration should consider January 1995 as the *de facto* start of the project through December 1999.

18. Fisheries management is by its very nature a complex multi-disciplinary problem, the solutions of which require different sector inputs. The **BOBP**, given its limited staff complement and resource base, has to be necessarily limited to the mandate given to it by the member countries in order to do justice to the task. To address the needs of enabling and facilitating fisheries management in a more holistic frame, the BOBP may play a catalytic role to facilitate member countries to address needs beyond its immediate mandate, subject to the availability of staff-time and resources.

19. In order to strengthen BOBP and give it the capacity to address fisheries management and coastal aquaculture management needs of its members in a more comprehensive manner Member Countries may wish to modify suitably the mandate of BOBP and seek additional donor support to translate the larger mandate into action.

20. The 1997 workplans proposed for each member country and the region as a whole are agreed to in principle, and should be refined and finalized by the Project in consultation with their counterparts prior to implementation.

POST-HARVEST FISHERIES (ODA)

21. Appropriate measures need to be urgently taken to ensure the right of domestic consumers to fish and fish products free from harmful chemicals.

22. Due consideration should be given to the question of by-catch discards in the region and Member countries are encouraged to collect data on estimates of by-catch, species composition of by-catch and on the socio-economic aspects of landing and utilizing by-catch.

23. Post-harvest fisheries is an important part of fisheries management, and enables the maximum utilization of resources by making the most of what is caught or cultured.

24. To increase the impact of post-harvest fisheries interventions and to enable post-project sustainability there is a need for closer coordination between concerned agencies involved in the post-harvest sector.

25. The Government of India indicated its intention to extend support for post-harvest initiatives such as fish containers, etc., and is proposing scheme(s) within the framework of the ensuing Ninth Five Year Plan.

CLEANER FISHERY HARBOURS (IMO)

26. The 1997 workplan proposed for Maldives and Sri Lanka is agreed to in principle, and

should be refined, modified and finalized by the project in consultation with their counterparts prior to implementation.

OTHER MATTERS

27. There is a need for Member Countries to collectively address the increasing use of non-tariff trade barriers based on environmental and conservation issues such as the use of turtle excluder devices, and consider ways and means to consider the interests of countries and the environment in a more balanced manner.

28. The enforcement capacity of fisheries agencies needs to be strengthened to enable them to monitor and control illegal encroachment by fishers into national waters, and to enforce their fisheries regulations.

29. There is need for regional or sub-regional mechanisms to resolve problems resulting from fishers encroaching and drifting into other national waters which often result in distressing situations with considerable hardships to fishers, and are often difficult to solve as bilateral issues.

30. A lesser known benefit of a programme such as the BOBP is that by being a neutral party it is often able to facilitate the coming together and working of government agencies thus mobilizing concerted and integrated action.

31. The FAO Investment Centre-led mission, which is presently in the field to assist the Member Countries in the revision and finalization of GEF B Block proposal, informed the Committee of its terms of reference and the modalities of GEF proposal development. The mission sought the Committee's views on a number of critical issues, including priority transboundary problems in the region, and regional and national co-operation mechanisms on the environment.

NEXT MEETING

32. The Committee gratefully acknowledged the invitation of the Government of India to host the next meeting of the Advisory Committee in conjunction with the 10th Session of the IOFC/BOBC in New Delhi, subject to government clearance.

33. The Committee also gratefully acknowledged the invitation of the Government of Sri Lanka to host the subsequent meeting of the Advisory Committee in Sri Lanka, subject to government clearance.

ADOPTION OF REPORT

34. The report was adopted on 13 February 1997