



NACA Newsletter

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19th Governing Council meeting held in Kathmandu, Nepal

The Government of Nepal hosted the 19th NACA Governing Council Meeting in Kathmandu from 5-8 March. Delegates from NACA's 17 member governments and FAO's Assistant Director General, Mr Ichiro Nomura, were welcomed by the Honorable Mr Chhabi Lal Bishwokarma, Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives. The meeting was opened by Mr Nagendra P. Chaudhary, State Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives, with opening remarks delivered by Mr Bharat Prasad Upadhyay, Director General, Department of Agriculture.

Collectively, NACA members represent around 90% of global aquaculture production by volume. The Governing Council is NACA's peak policy body, which meets on an annual basis to review the work plan and determine the direction of the organization.

The Governing Council has slated a number of new activities for 2008. Chief among these was a request to develop a programme on aquaculture of indigenous highland/coldwater species,

in collaboration with FAO, as a measure to combat the disproportionately high levels of poverty affecting rural communities in mountainous areas.

Other new initiatives to commence in 2008 include an increased emphasis on production and marketing of 'not so high value' fish species, which are economically important to many rural communities; a desk study on the feasibility of culture and marketability of alternative marine finfish species to identify priorities for aquaculture research and development; inclusion of traceability as an issue in 'better management practice' and aquaculture certification projects; and establishment of an 'on the job' training and staff exchange programme among members, to build capacity of local personnel.

Speaking at the meeting, Mr Ichiro Nomura, FAO, highlighted the huge increase in aquatic food production that will be required to feed a growing world population. By 2030, it is projected that the world will need to produce an additional 37 million tonnes just to



*The Hon. Chhabi Lal Bishwokarma,
Minister for Agriculture and
Cooperatives.*

sustain current per capita consumption levels, the increased demand fueled simply by population growth. With most fisheries resources now fully exploited or depleted, the bulk of this will need to be farmed. Aquaculture is likely to make an increasingly important contribution to local food security and livelihoods, particularly in many remote and resource-poor rural areas.

"The challenge is to develop approaches to increase the contribution of aquaculture, which are realistic and achievable, within the context of current social, economic, environmental and political circumstances", Mr Nomura said. "Such approaches should not focus only on increasing production; they should also focus on producing a product that is affordable, acceptable and accessible to all sectors of the society".

Mr Nomura went on to highlight the need to promote regional networking and cooperation for aquaculture devel-



Lighting of the ceremonial lamp by the Hon. Minister.

opment, noting that the FAO Committee on Fisheries and its Sub Committee on Aquaculture had suggested that NACA-like mechanisms be established in the Americas, Africa and the Pacific Islands. Significant progress had been made over the past few years with the establishment of the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Central-Eastern Europe in 2004, and the Aquaculture

Network for Africa in 2007, which would provide a platform for both intra- and inter-regional collaboration.

NACA would like to thank the Government of Nepal for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality offered to all delegations. The Report of the Director General to GC 19 is available

for download, including information on NACA's activities for the previous year, from:

<http://www.enaca.org/modules/wfdownloads/singlefile.php?cid=199&lid=923>.

OIE/NACA Regional Workshop on Aquatic Animal Health

The OIE/NACA Regional Workshop on Aquatic Animal Health organised by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA), was opened on 25 March 2008 in Maruay Garden Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand by Dr Sakchai Sriboonsue, Director General of Department of Livestock Development, Royal Government of Thailand.

The objectives of the 4 day (25-28 March 2008) workshop were:

1. To recognise the importance of control and prevention of aquatic animal diseases, of their negative impacts and of responsibilities of government authorities;
2. To provide updated information on Emerging Aquatic Animal Diseases in the Region;
3. To train National Focal points on OIE Aquatic Animal Disease Standards (OIE Code and Manual) and on OIE World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS) (using computers) for the purpose of 1 above; and
4. To strengthen regional collaboration on aquatic animal disease control and prevention.

Dr Fujita, OIE Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific, in his address stressed the importance of control and prevention of aquatic animal diseases and noted that the workshop would provide an opportunity for focal points to share updated information on emerging aquatic animal diseases in the region, and to strengthen international collaboration in the development of OIE aquatic animal health standards including the Aquatic Animal Health Code and the Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animal Diseases.



Dr Sriboonsue, Director General of the Department of Livestock Development, Thailand (left); Dr Teruhide Fujita, OIE Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific (right).

Professor Sena De Silva, Director General of NACA, highlighted the importance of aquaculture to the region and emphasized the commitment of NACA to promoting responsible aquatic animal health management in the region. He thanked the Royal Government of Thailand for hosting the meeting. He also noted and thanked Dr Sakchai Sriboonsue, Director General of the Department of Livestock Development, and Dr Somying Piamsomboon, Director General of the Department of Fisheries, for their ongoing support to regional aquatic animal health management in the region.

The DG of the DOF in her message congratulated OIE and NACA for coordinating the workshop and highlighted the need to strengthening surveillance and reporting in the region. The DG of DLD emphasized the need for rapid sharing of disease information in order to minimize the spread of

pathogens associated with international trade. He urged the participants to make best use of the workshop and contribute to improved reporting from the region.

OIE aquatic focal points nominated by OIE delegates from 19 countries in the region are participating in the workshop. Resource experts from the OIE Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission, OIE Information Department (Paris), OIE Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific, FAO, Thailand Department of Fisheries, Mahidol University in Bangkok, SEAFDEC AQD and NACA are providing technical presentations and hands on practical training in WAHIS online reporting.

A new initiative to establish and operationalise a WAHIS OIE-NACA 'Regional Core' database on aquatic animal diseases that will accommodate OIE listed and non-OIE listed diseases of regional concern is also being

discussed. The QAAD (Quarterly aquatic animal disease) reporting system will continue until the WAHIS OIE-NACA regional core becomes functional. The NACA Asia Regional Advisory Group on Aquatic Animal Health (AG) will support the WAHIS OIE-NACA Regional Core and assist in revising the list of diseases to be included in the Regional Core on an annual basis. The Regional Core is intended to increase the speed and accuracy of international aquatic animal

disease reporting and to provide a valuable resource for the formulation of international trade and quarantine policy. The Regional Core will be based on the same software as WAHIS, which allows member governments to submit disease reports directly to the OIE Central Bureau in Paris via a web-based interface, and contains an automated warning system that alerts members via email when one member submits an urgent disease notification. The envisaged Regional Core will provide access

to both current and historical records on the aquatic animal health status in member countries and can generate customized health/disease status reports on demand. The outputs of the Regional Core will be hosted on NACA and OIE Regional Representation for Asia and the Pacific websites.

The report and recommendations from the workshop will be available for download on the NACA website in due course.

Vietnam catfish BMP project kicks off

The project Development of Better Management Practices for Catfish Aquaculture in the Mekong Delta kicked off with its first planning meeting held at Can Tho University on 29 January, followed by several days in the field visiting farms and processing plants.

The catfish farming industry in Vietnam is growing at a phenomenal rate. In 2007 the industry is estimated to have produced at least 1.2 million tonnes of catfish, already exceeding the government's 2010 development target and delivering a massive US\$ 1 billion economic boost to farmers and rural communities.

As the industry is still in a phase of rapid expansion considerable interest has arisen in issues of sustainability, with several NGO groups vying to develop certification 'standards' for catfish production. However, previous experience has shown that such standards can be difficult for small scale farmers to follow, particularly when high targets are set without any practical guidance to farmers on how to meet them.

The philosophy of the catfish 'better management practices' (BMP) project is different. The aim of the project is to help farmers improve their management practices, delivering increased profitability and environmental performance by making more efficient use of resources. BMPs are implemented voluntarily and the incentive to adopt them is provided simply by their direct economic benefit to the farmer. BMPs are not certification standards, but they can help build the capacity of farmers to meet them.



Participants in the catfish BMP project planning meeting.

The visit provided a good first opportunity for project partners to begin scoping out the issues facing the industry with farmers and processors, and to develop a corresponding workplan and priorities for developing BMPs.

During discussions it quickly became apparent that seed quality is the number one issue of concern to farmers, as there is a shortage of supply and a marked deterioration in quality has occurred, leading to increasing losses in nursery and grow out. Health issues are also becoming more prevalent as the industry intensifies. Flesh quality, particularly colour which is affected by water quality and exchange rates within ponds, is an important issue for processors and exporters as it strongly affects price in some markets.

Catfish aquaculture is extraordinarily intensive with yields of 300-400 tonnes/ha not uncommon. It is likely that small improvements in feed quality, feeding efficiency and power usage could also translate into large economic and environmental gains for producers.

As a starting point for the development of better management practices, the Vietnamese project partners (RIA 2 and Can Tho University) will conduct a detailed survey of catfish hatcheries, production and processing in the delta in the first half of 2008, which will identify key issues where the development of better management practices may benefit the industry. The project will focus on simple, practical measures that farmers can easily implement, and will work closely with grass roots producers.

For more information visit the Catfish BMP webpage, which will be maintained as a summary of progress, developments and publications over the life of the project:

http://www.enaca.org/modules/inland_projects/index.php?content_id=1

The project is being implemented over a period of two years by the Department of Primary Industries Victoria, the Research Institute for Aquaculture No. 2 and Can Tho University together with NACA. It is funded by AusAID's Collaborative Agricultural Research and Development Programme.

Planning meeting, Regional Project on Reservoir Fisheries Development and Management

A planning meeting for the Regional Project on Reservoir Fisheries Development and Management was held from 14th to 16th January in the NACA Secretariat, Bangkok. This three year project is funded by the Icelandic Development Agency (ICEIDA). The meeting brought together 17 representatives of the five participating countries (China, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand), and from the South East Asian Fisheries Development Centre, who also expect to support the future participation of Lao PDR and Cambodia in the project activities.

Opening the meeting, ICEIDA representative Mr Arni Helgason noted that fisheries resources were of great importance both to Iceland and to Asia, and that ICEIDA had supported this project as a contribution towards the development of alternative ways to meet the increasing demand for fisheries product within the global scenario of stagnating wild fisheries production. He advised that ICEIDA had been similarly providing support in Sri Lanka since 2005, and hoped that the project would be the starting point of a long term partnership between NACA member countries and Iceland in this field.

The meeting reviewed the current status of reservoir fisheries in participating countries. The needs for improving the reservoir fishery yields and the livelihoods of fisher communities in each country were discussed along with opportunities for regional collaboration, leading to development of a number of concept proposals for implementation of the project both within and between participating countries.

Based on the deliberations, ten projects have been selected considering the importance of each to the proposing country as well as its degree of



Participants in the reservoir workshop planning meeting.

relevance to reservoir fisheries management and development in the region. NACA is pleased to announce that the activities selected for funding are:

- Role of fish species introduction in reservoir fisheries in China. A case study on successful introduction of icefish in Chinese reservoirs. Implemented over two years by the Institute of Hydrobiology and the Freshwater Fisheries Research Centre, Chinese Academy of Fisheries Sciences.
- Investigation of successful practices of culture-based reservoir fisheries in China. Implemented over two years by the Freshwater Fisheries Research Centre and the Institute of Hydrobiology, Chinese Academy of Fisheries Sciences.
- Capacity building of field staff on scientific aspects of inland fisheries development and effective data collection methods. Implemented over 6 months by the National Aquaculture Development Authority of Sri Lanka and Aquatic Resources and Quality Improvement Project.
- Exploitation of untapped fishery resources in reservoirs through proper management. Implemented over two years by the University of Kelaniya, the National Aquaculture Development Authority of Sri Lanka and the National Aquatic Resources Research & Development Agency.
- Impact of stocking size of fingerlings on culture-based fisheries in village reservoirs and their implications on the economics of mini-nurseries. Implemented over two years by the National Aquaculture Development Authority of Sri Lanka and National Aquatic Resources Research & Development Agency.
- Strengthening and consolidation of the knowledge of reservoir and lake fisheries management for

livelihood improvement of near by communities. This will have two components implemented over a total of two years the Nepal Agricultural Research Council and Directorate for Fisheries: i) complete documentation of the success story of provision of alternative livelihoods to displaced communities at Indrasarobar Reservoir, Kulekhani, and ii) Updating the database/profile on reservoirs and lakes (tectonic and oxbow) in respective to fisheries development and conservation management, specifically Jagdishpur Reservoir, and the Pokhara and Rupa lakes, Kapilvastu.

- Trend analysis of reservoir fisheries in Thailand. Implemented over 18 months by the University of Udonrachathani.
- Evaluation of the contribution and performance of tilapia and *Macrobrachium rosenbergii* to the fisheries in selected reservoirs in Thailand. Implemented over 18 months by the University of Udonrachathani.
- An evaluation and critique of tilapia fisheries outside Africa. Implemented over 18 months by NACA; the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka; the

Department of Fisheries, Thailand, and the University of Udonrachathani, Thailand.

Presentations and selected audio recordings of the meeting are available for download from:

http://www.enaca.org/modules/workshops/index.php?content_id=1

You can also track the progress of this project at its dedicated webpage:

http://www.enaca.org/modules/inland_projects/index.php?content_id=4

NACA to document “Aquaculture Success Stories”

One of the main recommendations of the workshop on Sustaining Aquaculture to 2025 and Beyond held in Rayong, Thailand (June 2007) was that there is a need to document “success stories” in aquaculture in suitable forms for dissemination to policy makers, mid-level technicians and practitioners. The workshop was of the view that such documentation will help bring about policy changes, particularly in emerging aquaculture nations to pursue aquaculture development in a sustainable and an environmentally friendly manner.

NACA through its MoU with the World Fisheries Trust (WFT), a NGO based in Vancouver, Canada, and the Institute for International Sustainable Development (IISD), Winnipeg, Canada, have linked to commence this work. Approximately US\$ 48K have been made available for the initial phase from the latter two organizations and a “Write Shop” where prospective experts on eight selected success stories will be brought together to achieve the task. It is planned that the “Write Shop” will be held in September-October 2008 and plans are now being finalized to commence the preparatory work.

6th Regional Grouper Hatchery Training Course – 5-25 May 2008

NACA is pleased to announce the 6th Regional Grouper Hatchery Production Training Course for the Asia-Pacific Marine Finfish Aquaculture Network. The course is schedule for 5 to 25 May 2008. For further information and registration form please send your request to Dr Sih Yang Sim at sim@enaca.org.

Registration and payment deadlines

The training course fee for NACA members is US\$2,000 (non NACA members US\$2,400) per person if registration and payment are received before the deadline. The training fee covers most lunches and some dinners, airport pickup, local transport for field trips and training course related activities only. The fees and payment deadlines are:

Participants from NACA members

- Now until 14th March 2008 – US\$2,000 per person
- 15th March to 4th April 2008 – US\$ 2,300 per person
- 5th April to 25th April 2008 – US\$2,600 per person

Participants from non-NACA members

- Now until 14th March 2008 – US\$2,400 per person
- 15th March to 4th April 2008 – US\$ 2,700 per person
- 5th April to 25th April 2008 – US\$3,000 per person

The hotel is around US\$18-30/night/person inclusive of breakfast, depending of the type of room one chooses. Participants will pay direct to the hotel. However, booking is made through the organizers. The training course only accepts limited number of participants and it is operated as first come first served. A copy of the training report for 2007 is available for download at NACA website at:

<http://www.enaca.org/modules/news/article.php?storyid=1085>

Establishing a Working Party on Aquaculture Statistics

FAO in collaboration with NACA will hold a workshop on, "Establishing a Coordinating Working Party on Aquaculture Statistics (CWP-AS)" in Nakorn Nayok, Thailand between the 8th to 10th of January 2008. The need to establish a CWP-AS has long been recognised, and has been endorsed at many consultations and fora including the Sub-Committee on Aquaculture of the Committee on Fisheries at its meeting in New Delhi in September 2006, and then by the Committee on Fisheries itself at its meeting in Rome in March 2007. The CWP-AS will have the same terms of reference as the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP-FS), i.e. to:

- Keep under continuous review the requirements for aquaculture statistics for research, policy-making and management
- Agree on standard concepts, definitions, classifications and methodologies for the collection and collation of aquaculture statistics, and
- Make proposals for the coordination and to streamline aquaculture statistical activities amongst relevant intergovernmental organizations.

It is expected that the establishment of the CWP-AS will result in improved statistical collection in aquaculture and related activities and consequently will help the countries to plan aquaculture developments better and more strategically.

Implementing the ASEAN Roadmap for Integration of Fisheries Sector

At the invitation of the Department of Fisheries, Thailand, the Regional workshop on implementing the ASEAN Roadmap for Integration of Fisheries Sector was held from 16 to 18 January 2008 in Bangkok, Thailand.

The Workshop was initiated to support ASEAN Member Countries in the realization of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by 2010 through the implementation of the Roadmap for Integration of the Priority Sectors, including fisheries, in order to further deepen and accelerate regional economic integration and enhance international competitiveness of ASEAN products. The workshop reviewed progress and status in the implementation of the Roadmap for the fisheries sector; developed an ASEAN common framework for the specific key issues/measures of the Roadmap; and clarified and formulated supporting mechanism and follow-up actions to facilitate future coordination and implementation of the Roadmap.

The workshop was attended by 62 participants from the 10 ASEAN Member Countries, the ASEAN secretariat, FAO, NACA, SEAFDEC, SEAFDEC - Marine Research Development, and Department of Fisheries - Thailand (DOF-Thailand). The participants included experts from government agencies, international and regional organizations and observers from the private sector.

The Workshop was organized under the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (ASSP) in collaboration with FAO and NACA, with funding support from SEAFDEC-SIDA collaborative project.

London Expert Workshop on Aquaculture Certification

The Expert Workshop on Guidelines for Aquaculture Certification took place on 28-29 February at the headquarters of the Department of International Development (DFID) in London, organised by FAO in cooperation with NACA and the Seafood Choices Alliance. The workshop was the fourth in a series of stakeholder meetings to assist the preparation of international guidelines for aquaculture certification, as requested by the FAO Aquaculture Sub-Committee. The three aquaculture certification export workshops to date have focussed largely on Asia and Latin America, as major producing regions of the world. The London meeting gathered views and expert inputs from stakeholders in Europe on certification



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of aquaculture products, including representatives of European aquaculture farmers, and large importers and retailers of aquaculture products. The workshop also explored the status, opportunities and mechanisms for enhanced supply chain partnerships to support aquaculture certification in producing countries and market access for aquaculture in the European market.

Further background documents and presentations from the workshop and aquaculture certification program, along with the latest draft of the International Guidelines for Aquaculture Certification, are available at the Certification section of the NACA website:

http://www.enaca.org/modules/workshops/index.php?content_id=3.