



BOBLME Workshop

“Fisheries Statistical Working Group” to Support Development of Regional and Sub-regional Fisheries Management Plans

19 -20 March 2012, Medan, Indonesia

Background

Strengthening (harmonization and standardization) of fisheries data collection and analysis to promote collaborative fisheries management approaches are major activities under the BOBLME Component 2 dealing with “Coastal and Marine Natural Resources Management and Sustainable Use”.

Data harmonization between countries has early been identified as a primary requirement for use of fisheries data or fisheries statistics in regional fisheries management. With the large number of diverse types of fishing crafts and fishing gears in use in the Bay of Bengal, it is considered necessary to standardize fishing effort within as well as between countries through a unified or harmonized fisheries data collection and statistical system. This initiative is in support of national and regional strengthening of fisheries data that will facilitate improved resources assessment and decision making for fisheries management and policy drafting in the BOBLME countries.

For BOBLME Project formulation a questionnaire type survey had been conducted by FAO to ascertain to what extent fisheries data are used for stock assessment and management, followed by consultative visits to partner countries.

At about the same time, individual countries have undertaken related programmes for “Strengthening of Database and Information networking for the Fisheries Sector (India, 2004-2005), covering a census of marine fisheries and streamlining catch assessment surveys, coordinated by CMFRI and FSI, respectively. Sri Lanka has, through various post-tsunami donor support funding, embarked on a fishing boat census and registration and has prepared a project proposal on marine fisheries catch and effort survey.

In Southeast Asia, SEAFDEC, in collaboration with FAO, has taken the lead in developing Regional Guidelines for Fishery Statistics for Capture Fisheries in Southeast Asia and a Regional Framework for Fishery Statistics, which provide for minimum requirements and facilitate sharing of fishery information. The Framework covers classifications of fishing areas, sub-sectors, commodities, gears and boats, among others, and contains details on statistical and geographical coverage.

On 28-29 April 2010, in Bangkok, Thailand, BOBLME, in collaboration with SEAFDEC, held a “Fisheries Statistical Working Group” to Support Development of Regional and Sub-regional Fisheries Management Plans. The Working Group meeting formulated a number of recommendations with regard to data harmonization and common requirements for improving national system for fisheries statistics and information, in particular concerning the BOBLME focus species.

Recommendations contained in the Workshop Report of the First Meeting of the BOBLME

Sharks Working Group (5-7 July 2011, Male, Maldives) also focus on the need to improve catch data collection and regional catch data harmonization. The importance of improved data collection and fisheries statistics is also expressed in several BOBLME stock assessment and related training reports on hilsa shad and Indian mackerel.

The APFIC/FAO Regional Consultative Workshop “Strengthening assessment of fisheries and aquaculture in the Asia-Pacific region for policy development” (4 – 6 October 2011, Yangon, Myanmar) recommended, among others: *“Make greater use of data from commercial fishing vessels, logbooks/catch certificates and scientific observers on commercial vessels. Work with landing sites and use of middlemen for small scale fishers. Provide basic services to incentivize data provision by the private sector (positive incentives – technical advice, selective gear. ice) in exchange for information at landing sites. There is a general need to overhaul statistical systems to support fishery management.”*

BOBLME in November and December 2011 commissioned a review on the collection of catch/landings statistics for hilsa and Indian mackerel (small pelagics) in BOBLME countries (national and decentralized levels), covering also value of catch, cost of fishing, and contribution to economy (socio-economic information). Results of this review will be presented at this meeting.

Objectives

The objectives / expected results of the workshop are as follows:

1. To note new developments in fisheries statistics (data gathering, analysis and reporting) in the BOBLME countries, based on updates and reports from BOBLME countries
2. To review and operationalize recommendations from the Fisheries Statistical WG Meeting April 2010, in view of more recent developments (in the countries and in consideration of FAO-APFIC Stock assessment workshop Myanmar)
3. To note and discuss the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the recently completed review on fisheries catch and landings statistics
4. To further familiarize the South Asian BOBLME countries with the Fishery Statistics harmonization efforts of SEAFDEC, i.e. the Regional Guidelines and Framework and to decide on additional information provision (awareness raising) through formal knowledge transfer and to consider expanding these harmonization efforts (or certain elements) to the entire BOBLME.
5. To discuss current constraints faced in the production and update of national statistics; including data collection issues, constraints, and strengthening needs; and to discuss issues pertaining to the production of regional statistics
6. To consider the creation of an inventory (meta-database) of existing data and information and, to the extent possible, make available data, information and reports on hilsa (*Tenualosa ilisha*), small pelagics (*Rastrelliger kanagurta* and associated species), and sharks for stock assessment or review/update of existing assessments.
7. To draft and agree on a workplan to strengthen data and information collection, storage and management; including digitizing existing hardcopy data

The achievement of these objectives should assist Bay of Bengal countries in improving fisheries data collection systems and making progress towards regional, harmonized

approaches that will allow the countries to undertake in future joint resource assessment and management of the fisheries in the Bay. Future work can be aimed at strengthening and enhancing capacities of the national fisheries statistics units, research institutes and fisheries administration for better data collection and management practices.

Date and venue

This workshop will take place on 19-20 March, 2012 in Medan, Indonesia.

Participants

Participants to the workshop will be the BOBLME country focal persons for fisheries data management and the production of fisheries statistics (in general, two persons per country). For the ASEAN member countries, participants will be the national representatives of the ASEAN Network on Fishery Statistics or alternate, and one additional person. Further participants will be resource persons with fisheries data management experience (e.g. from FAO-BOBLME, IOTC, SEAFDEC). **Please note attendees will be requested to present the country report at this meeting, and actively engage on a technical level.**

Organizer and sponsors

The Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) Project is organizing the workshop in collaboration with the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), the Indonesian Ministry for Marine Affairs and Fisheries, and the Provincial Fisheries Office of North Sumatra Province.

Workshop programme

The workshop will consist of an opening session and seven sessions for substantive issues, followed by a closing session. A workshop programme is currently being developed.

DRAFT AGENDA

BOBLME Workshop “Fisheries Statistical Working Group” to Support Development of Regional and Sub-regional Fisheries Management Plans

Opening

Welcome address/Opening remarks: Dr. Yulistyo Mudho, Director, Statistics and Information Office (tbc), MMAF, Dr. Rishi Sharma, Fish Stock Assessment Coordinator, Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem Project; Ir. Razali, Head of Aceh Provincial Marine Affairs and Fisheries Office, Dr H. Zulkarnain SH. M.Si, Head of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of North Sumatra Province

Session 1: Country reports – updates from BOBLME Countries

Discussions of recent developments and preliminary conclusions. Each country will give a 15 minute overview of their recent work and developments regarding their activities.

Sessions 2: Report of the Fisheries Statistical Working Group April 2010 (SEAFDEC)

Discussion and validation of Fish Stats WG recommendations. SEAFDEC will give an overview of their findings (30 Minutes)

Session 3: Presentation of data collection review (Dr. Rishi Sharma for Dr. Kim Stobberup)

Discussion and validation of findings, conclusions and recommendations (1 hr+1 hr. discussion)

Session 4: Standardization and harmonization efforts by SEAFDEC (SEAFDEC)

Deliberation on relevance for South Asia and related capacity development needs

Session 5: Break-out groups by sub-regions or resources (hilsa, Indian mackerel, sharks)

Elaboration of recommendations on improved data collection and management

Session 6: Plenary – Presentation of Break-out Groups results, validation and prioritization of recommendation

Session 7: Elaboration of workplan for activities to be carried out in countries and identification of actions for BOBLME Strategic Action Programme

Workshop Closure