



Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem Project



Enhancing capacity of fishing communities for
Resource management

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Executive summary

ICSF undertook capacity development initiatives in six locations in five countries (India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Thailand), as part of the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) Project supported activities on “Enhancing capacities of fishing communities for resource management”. Drawing on the traditional and experiential knowledge and institutions of fishing communities, work undertaken inter alia aimed to enhance their capacity to relate their knowledge systems with an ecosystem approach to fisheries and to promote sustainable and equitable use of resources. Work undertaken also sought to strengthen local organizations and enhance their linkages and working relationships with local-level functionaries responsible for fisheries and coastal resources management.

Six community-level workshops were organized in five countries—Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh and India (two workshops — Sundarbans and Gulf of Mannar). These workshops have been useful in helping communities discuss and develop proposals for the management, conservation and sustainable use of fisheries resources. These training programmes provided an opportunity for communities to understand some of the concepts of co-management and community based management, especially from an ecosystem perspective. Each training programme had its own design, some including preparatory workshops, and discussions with communities, while others focused on local training programmes followed by a workshop to discuss the proposals from the training programme with government officials.

Over 500 members from fishing communities have been trained during this process, some of whom are community/FWO leaders, including women especially seaweed collectors in Gulf of Mannar and women community leaders in Myanmar and Thailand. As part of the preparations for these workshops, training material in different languages was prepared, including an illustrated handbook for communities on EAF. Resource material in local languages appropriate to the context was also produced.

Additionally, a study to document the traditional knowledge of fishing communities and its relevance for resource management in Gulf of Mannar, India, was undertaken.

As part of the training programme, ICSF also organized a sub-regional dialogue on labour, migration and fisheries management, from 11 to 13 December 2013, at Bangkok. It was attended by IGOs such as the ILO, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), SEAFDEC, academia, labour unions, CSOs, NGOs, industry representatives of vessel owners and fish processors, and government bodies from Thailand, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Cambodia. The dialogue sought coherence in the ASEAN region across sea safety, labour conditions and fisheries management measures. Since Thailand employs the largest number of migrant fishers in this region, with more than 80 per cent fishers on board Thai vessels originating from Myanmar, Cambodia and Lao PDR, the focus of the dialogue became Thailand. The dialogue proposed a formation of a working group, that would take forward some of the discussions and suggestions from the dialogue. There was extensive support including from regional organizations. As part of the preparations for the training programme, a planning meeting was organized in September 2013, and a field visit was also made to Myanmar in November 2013.

A five day exposure trip (17-20 March, 2014) was also organized for representatives from four fishing communities of Myanmar to visit Cambodia, along with a government representative and civil society representative. The exposure trip was jointly organized with the Fisheries Administration (FiA), Government of Cambodia, as a follow-up to the training programme organized in Myanmar. The participants from Myanmar got an understanding of the legal systems for community fisheries (CFs) as well as administrative aspects of functioning. They shared that the legal set up in Myanmar currently is not amenable to such a community fisheries system since each region has its own laws. Post the exposure trip, there has been plans to change the fishery laws in Rakhine district, where

there would be more emphasis on co-management. A draft legal framework for co-management is now open for public consultation with communities.

Workshops and training sessions organized were useful in enhancing the capacity of FWOs to engage with issues related to fisheries management and coastal zone management in a proactive manner. In addition, activities undertaken have facilitated the sharing of knowledge and information on key issues of relevance for small-scale fisheries in Asia. Training and capacity building activities undertaken have enabled local fishing communities to discuss issues related to resources management and their proposals for the same, with scientists and officials. In some locations such a process was undertaken for the first time.

The process followed for these training programmes was one of the first of its kind to get the local communities to highlight their problems to the provincial and national level governments. This can be seen as a first step in the process of initiating a participatory decision-making process for ecosystem based approach to fisheries management.

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Acronyms used

ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
BFWA	Bangladesh Fish Workers' Alliance (Bangladesh)
BLC	Boat Licence Certificate
BOBLME	Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem Project
CF	Community Fisheries
CMFRI	Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (India)
CMSCRI	Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute (India)
COAST	Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust (Bangladesh)
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DISHA	Society for Direct Initiative for Social and Health Action (India)
DMCR	Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (Thailand)
DMF	Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum (India)
DOF	Department of Fisheries (Myanmar)
DoF	Department of Fisheries (Thailand)
EAF	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries
FDA	Fisher Development Association (Myanmar)
FiA	Fisheries Administration (Government of Cambodia)
FRA	Forests Rights Act (India)
FWO	Fish Workers Organisations
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICSF	International Collective in Support of Fish workers
ID Card	Identity Card
IGSSF	International Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INR	Indian Rupees
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
LMMA	Locally Managed Marine Area
MoEF	Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India
NAG	Network Activities Group (Myanmar)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PAD	People's Action for Development (India)
PO	People's Organisation (Bangladesh)
Pushal-KP (Indonesia)	Centre for Study of Marine Customary Law and Fisheries Policy, Banda Aceh
RFTU	Ramnad District Fishworkers' Trade Union (India)
SBR	Sundarbans Biosphere Reserve
SDF	Sustainable Development Foundation (Thailand)
SSF	Small Scale Fisheries

STR	Sundarbans Tiger Reserve
ToT	Training of Trainers
UN FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation
Unsyiah	University of Syiah Kuala (Indonesia)
USD	United States Dollars
WLPA	Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972
WLS	Wild Life sanctuary

Currency exchange rate: 1 USD = 60.24 INR

Rate as of 16.04.2014

Source: www.xe.com

Introduction

The Bay of Bengal region has over 400 million people dependent on coastal and marine resources for their food, livelihood and security. However, rapid population growth, high dependence on resources and increased land use has resulted in over exploitation of fish stocks and habitat degradation, and has led to considerable uncertainty whether the ecosystem will be able to support the livelihoods of the coastal populations in the future. In this context the need to work closely with local communities, enabling them to play an integral role in the resource management is increasingly evident.

Ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) is central to implementing such regional level management systems. EAF is a globally accepted concept which shifts focus from sustainable harvest of target species towards systems that balance ecological well-being, human social and economic well-being and good governance. And the current UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) supported Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) project with the International Collective in Support of Fish workers (ICSF) has been working in this direction trying to enhance the capacities of fishing communities for better resource management using EAF in the Bay of Bengal region.

Objective

The project aimed to enhance the capacities of fishing communities for resource management. The project would enable fishing community members to relate their traditional knowledge systems with an ecosystem approach to fisheries and explore institutional arrangements needed for such an approach.

Original plan

ICSF had initially proposed the following activities:

- Organize and conduct a planning meeting
- Develop resource material for the training, including a handbook or guidebook
- Conduct six fishing community level training programmes in India (2), Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia
- Conduct two sub-regional dialogues on migration, decent working conditions and fisheries management
- Organize an exposure visit programme for fisher representatives

Deviation

Planning meeting

The planning meeting was undertaken in May 2013, prior to the contract with BOBLME. The costs for the meeting were met by ICSF through its own regular resources. ICSF has requested to use the amount in the budget for the planning meeting towards the six fishing community level training programmes and the proposed exposure visit (via email dated 04 July 2013). Permission for the same was informed on 29 July 2013.

Sub-regional dialogues on migration

The earlier plan was to hold two such dialogues in Southeast and South Asia. However, given the emerging context and the costs involved, the proposal is to organize one larger dialogue in Thailand, inviting participants from other Southeast Asian countries.

Activities organized

ICSF conducted training programmes for fishing communities in five countries – two in India (between October 2013 and February 2014), and one each in Bangladesh, Myanmar and Indonesia (all in November 2013). The workshop in Thailand was delayed due the political situation in the country and was held in March 2014. A labour dialogue was also organised in Thailand in December 2013. This was preceded by a planning meeting.

The focus of the training programmes while keeping with the overall objectives of the project, varied somewhat depending on the region.

Table 1 ICSF training programmes for fishing communities in four countries

Country	Partner organization	Activities organized	Reports
India - Sundarbans, West Bengal	ICSF Trust, DISHA, and DMF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven training programmes in different parts of Sundarbans- 26 November 2013 – 10 February 2014 • Two day workshop to consolidate the training programme proposals - 24-25 March 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOBLME-2013-Socioec-03.pdf • BOBLME-2014-Socioec-06.pdf
India – Gulf of Mannar, Ramanathapuram district	ICSF Trust, PAD and RFTU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two training programmes organized <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pamban – 23, 24 October 2013 and ○ Ramanathapuram- 25, 26 October, 2013 • Study on traditional knowledge of the fishing communities of the Gulf of Mannar with respect to fishery resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOBLME-2013-Socioec-04.pdf • BOBLME-2014-Socioec-07.pdf
Bangladesh	Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust (COAST), Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up of community-based organizations called People’s Organization (PO) • Short study on ecosystems and fishing communities of Cox’s Bazar and Moheshkhali Upazila • Two training programmes organized at the COAST office, Cox’s Bazar - 22-24 and 26-28 November 2013 • National seminar on ‘Challenges in Ensuring Access to Coastal Resources: Ecosystem and Fishing Communities of Cox’s Bazar’ - 22 February 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOBLME-2013-Socioec-05.pdf

Myanmar	Network Action Group (NAG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Manual for Fishery Co-management developed • Fishery co-management workshop with fisher leaders - 7-8 October 2013 in Pyapon • Community-level Consultation Meetings in 7 villages - 22 October 2013 - 1 November 2013 • Workshop for Finalizing the Co-management Plan in 7 villages - 14 November 2013 • Advocacy workshop on fishery co-management with key stakeholders in the fishery sector i.e. 2nd Ayeyarwaddy Regional Fishery Development Workshop – 21-23 November 2013 in Patheingyi Township 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOBLME-2013-Socioec-06.pdf
Indonesia	Centre for Study of Marine Customary Law and Fisheries Policy (Pushal-KP) of the University of Syiah Kuala (Unsyiah), Banda Aceh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three day training programme in 26-28 November 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOBLME-2013-Socioec-07.pdf
Thailand	SDF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two consultation meetings in October 2013 • Study and survey in November 2013 • Forum meeting in March 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOBLME-2014-Socioec-08.pdf
Regional Labour Dialogue	SDF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning meeting • Regional dialogue on labour organized between 11-13 December 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOBLME-2013-Socioec-02.pdf
Exposure trip	NAG, ICSF and Fisheries Administration, Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four day exposure trip organized to Cambodia (Trapaeng Sangke, Kandaek, Kampong Phluk, FiA office in Phnom Penh), - 17-21 March 2014. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOBLME-2014-Socioec-09.pdf

Outcomes

1. India - Sundarbans, West Bengal

In India, seven training programmes were organized in the Sundarbans region in the eastern state of West Bengal (26 November 2013-10 February 2014). The decisions/resolutions arrived at these programmes were discussed at a two day workshop in Kolkata, India (24-25 March 2014).

In the Sundarbans the focus was on ascertaining fishers' opinion on governance and management of the Sundarbans and enhancing their capacity to develop proposals for sustainable use, conservation and management of resources in the Sundarbans.

The Sundarbans is a difficult terrain to traverse making communication extremely complicated. Hence, the fishing community has been a splintered one; organisations like the Society for Direct Initiative for Social and Health Action (DISHA) and Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum (DMF) who work in the region have therefore been hampered in bringing the larger Sundarbans fishing community together. For the first time, programmes were held across the Sundarbans to break this barrier. This lack of cohesiveness in the community has also meant there is little knowledge of what issues are common across the region and what are unique to each area.

The training programmes helped identify these and therefore allowed DISHA, DMF, ICSF Trust and the community identify issues that could be taken forward as a collective. Therefore, the two day follow-up workshop was required for this purpose of clarifying common issues and ways and means to address them.

1.1. Background

Sundarbans is a unique ecosystem consisting of mangrove forests, mud flats and swamps. Located in the delta of the River Ganga, it is a protected area consisting of the Sundarbans Tiger Reserve (STR), the Sundarbans National Park, several wildlife sanctuaries (WLSs) and the Sundarbans Biosphere Reserve (SBR)¹. These were designated at various times starting in 1973. The protected area has also increased in size in the intervening years, reducing the space open for fishing and collection of non-timber forest produce like honey and fuel wood. While the protected area itself has no resident human population, many people live nearby and are dependent on the forests for their livelihood and to meet daily needs of fuel wood and other produce. This community has not been involved in any of the decision making or governance of the forest. Neither has there been any process of settling rights before declaring the protected area and thereby curbing access to resources. Over the years, fishers have had a limited access to the resources through the issuance of boat licence certificates (BLCs). For the tiger reserve area, 923 BLCs are allowed though, for various reasons, less than 700 are active. In the protected area outside the tiger reserve, 3600 'Forest' BLCs are allowed. Those with 'Tiger' BLCs are not allowed to fish in the non-tiger-reserve protected area and vice versa. However, considering the fishing community population is much higher than what can be supported by the meagre number of BLCs, many fishers perforce enter the tiger reserve and the remaining protected area without BLCs at the risk of being caught by the forest department and having to face penalties.

1.2. Activities

The workshops in total had 491 participants – 360 men and 131 women. Before the local workshops, a set of framework questions, addressing fishers' experience and proposals for governance measures, was circulated to the local workshop organizers, for preparing the participants.

¹ National parks, sanctuaries and tiger reserves are declared under the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 and its amendments. Biosphere Reserves are declared under the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme.

1.3. Outputs

Given below are the resolutions/decisions taken at the seven workshops. Since there were some differences of opinion between regions, multiple and perhaps contradictory resolutions on the same subject may be seen. Further discussion with the larger fishing community would be needed to finalize decisions and take further action.

Resolutions / Decisions

On fishers role in policy making and governance

- Those who are dependent on the Sundarbans should be responsible for the welfare and development of the same. Therefore, policies and restrictions should not be imposed from above.
- Fishers and fishing should be subject to restrictions. Fishing in breeding areas was to be avoided, irrespective of it being in core or buffer zone². However, such restrictions must come not as undemocratic administrative fiat but from the Sundarbans fishers acting in cooperative capacity.

On the core area

- The size of the core area should decrease to its original size. Alternatively, fishers should be allowed to fish in some parts of the Core Area.
- Travel through and sheltering during foul weather in the core area should be allowed.
- Spatial no fishing zones unnecessary; the Core Areas and the WLSs must be thrown open to fishing.
- About one-third of the "Core Area" may be maintained as no fishing zone; the rest must be thrown open to fishing.
- Core areas should not be confused with fishing restrictions. Core areas, in terms of tiger habitats, could be increased or decreased based on tiger ecology; however, fishing restrictions must be based on the ecology of fish resources.

On Boat Licence Certificates (BLCs)

- BLCs should be substituted by licences/permits issued to all genuine fishers.
- Local lists of such fishers must be prepared in consultation with the local fishing community.

On fishing bans

- The fishing season should not be more than six months: from Kartik to Phalgun, perhaps a little during early Chaitra [roughly 19 October to the end of March]. Thus, there should be a no fishing season of at least six-months; however, there should be provision for compensating fishers during the six month no fishing period
- Fishers willing to abide by the three-month fishing ban from Chaitra-Joistho (Mid-March to End June); however, the fishing ban should not be for any longer period.
- The no fishing season of three months must be strictly implemented.

² Tiger Reserves are demarcated into a core (where no human activity is allowed) and a buffer (where limited activity is allowed).

On welfare schemes³

- Efforts should be made to bring all the fishers under the net of “Sanchay-O-Traan Prokolpo” (savings-cum-relief scheme). Sanchay-O-Traan Prokolpo and fishermen pension schemes should be implemented in addition to Samajik Suraksha (social security) Cards
- All fishers should get the benefit of Savings-cum-Relief Scheme and some extra financial support to tide them through the no fishing season
- Benefits through Gitanjali Prokolpo (housing scheme) should also be implemented quickly and with transparency
- General Insurance Company scheme to be implemented (USD 1659.90) on death of the insured and the premium paid by government)
- Fish storage facilities and infrastructure development like jetties are necessary
- An ice factory needs to be set up near the Canning Fish market (Issue specifically raised at Canning Workshop)
- Renovation of the Fish wholesale market at Canning to be done immediately (Issue specifically raised at Canning Workshop)
- Pensions for old fishers over 60 years should be implemented
- Genuine fishers who are unable to go on fishing expeditions due to old age, ailments, or injury must be given pension.

On fisher identity cards

- Biometric cards for fishermen should be issued early and to all fishers.

On compensation for tiger attacks

- Compensation/insurance payment should be distributed promptly and without fail to tiger and crocodile victims irrespective of where the attack happened—in the fishing-permitted zone, Core Area, or WLS.

On fishing practices

- Trawlers and mechanized boats to be effectively banned in inland waters and waters close to the coast
- Use of mosquito nets for fishing to be banned
- Chawrpata (shore stake nets), particularly ones with very small mesh size, should be banned
- Crabs weighing less than 100 g should not be collected.

On alternative livelihoods

- Fishers could support themselves during the six-month no-fishing period by developing inland fish farms and crab farms
- Besides fish farming, poultry, piggery, goatery, and pigeon-rearing could be alternative livelihood options
- The fishers look forward to the government and non-government institutions to support them in these ventures.

On relations with the forest department

- Forest officers must desist from “foul behaviour” and offensive language.

On honey collection

- Honey-collectors have a right to get fair price for their honey

³ The Government of India and the Government of West Bengal offer several welfare schemes for fishers however in many places there are problems with effective implementation of the schemes.

- Honey-collectors must get the right to take the second cut (until the Forest Rights Act⁴ is implemented, when the forest-users can decide how best to dispose of non-timber forest produce).

On implementation of the legal provisions

- Steps should be taken to implement the existing relevant legal provisions like The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, suitable in the Sundarbans context, thus giving the fishers a fundamental say in the governance of Sundarbans' fishing and fisheries.

1.4. Training materials

In addition, training materials developed by ICSF were translated into the local language, Bengali and shared with participants. The materials were a booklet on EAF; a brochure on Small-Scale Fisheries: Their Contribution to Food Security, Poverty Alleviation and Sustainability; and a leaflet on the Draft Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the context of food security and poverty eradication.

1.5. Follow up

The proposals discussed at the two-day workshop with the leaders from the seven fishing areas, are being further discussed in their respective villages. The consolidated proposals will then be discussed with the respective government departments in West Bengal, at a one day workshop planned by ICSF Trust along with DISHA and DMF, in June 2014.

⁴ The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 is in common parlance referred to as the Forest Rights Act or FRA. The Act seeks to recognize and vest rights to land and resources in forests with forest dwellers.

2. India - Gulf of Mannar, Tamil Nadu

In the Gulf of Mannar in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, training programmes were conducted at two locations – Pamban (23-24 October 2013) and Ramanathapuram (25-26 October 2013); travel between villages and to the town is arduous as public transport is extremely limited and the participants, especially the women, have limited time to spare among their daily work schedule.

In the Gulf of Mannar, ICSF Trust has been working with the Ramnad District Fish Workers' Union (RFTU), and with People's Action for Development (PAD) for several years (see the country report on Gulf of Mannar for details) and the fishing communities, in spite of being scattered geographically, are politically and socially more cohesive than in the Sundarbans, hence the issues and problems were quite well known to all participants.

The focus here was more on developing community-led proposals for resource management. While the community has engaged with the government agencies at different levels, there has not been much progress in working on community-led management systems until now; it has always been a government-led process on management. The fishing community now plans to dialogue with the State, armed with the community's proposals for resource management and governance. Officials from forest and fisheries departments also attended the final session of the training programme and responded positively to the demands and management plans proposed by the community.

In preparation for discussions with the State, the community is currently holding intensive, village level discussions on the outcomes of the training programme.

In addition, a study on the traditional knowledge of fishers is being carried out by ICSF in the Gulf of Mannar, which is helping this process.

2.1. Background

The Gulf of Mannar is a semi-enclosed bay in the southern state of Tamil Nadu with coral reefs, and sea grass beds. The Gulf of Mannar National Park declared in 1986 under the Wildlife Protection Act (WLPA) of 1972, includes 21 uninhabited islands, and covers an area of almost 560 km². The notification of the National Park in 1986 means entry into the National Park and use of any natural resource from the area is prohibited.

The objectives of the on-going processes in the Gulf of Mannar are to enhance the capacity of fishing communities, drawing on their traditional and experiential knowledge and institutions, to:

- Relate their knowledge systems with an ecosystem approach to fisheries
- Explore and propose ways of enhancing sustainable and equitable resource use, and the role that communities can play
- Engage with functionaries at different levels responsible for fisheries and environment, towards developing a common vision and convergence in perspectives for achieving conservation and sustainable use of resources.

2.2. Activities

The two workshops had 187 participants. In both meetings, participants were divided into groups; two groups in the first location and three groups in the second location according to their livelihood activities. In the first location the groups were fishers and seaweed collectors and in the second location there was a group of sea cucumber collectors too in addition to the other two groups. Each group had brainstorming sessions and discussions on various issues like access to the islands, fishing ban period, the nature of the fishing gears, how to protect endangered species, community regulations etc.

2.3. Outputs

Discussions culminated in each group presenting their management proposals. The resolutions/proposals from the communities were grouped under various sub-heads such as regulations, compliance, monitoring, conflict resolution and review of plans.

Resolutions / Decisions

2.3.1. Fisheries group

Existing community regulations

- Don't catch dugongs or use nets that hurt dugongs
- Avoid destructive fishing practices
- Some community level restrictions for one day a week.

Suggested regulations

- Ban kedai valai (set gill net) and reduce the use of monofilament nets. Which other gear are destructive and must be banned has to be discussed
- Trawling must be stopped (the government must step in for this)
- Protect the resources in the islands; completely rocky areas (calcareous deposits) will be protected from fishing.

Communication and voluntary compliance

- Through village level meetings, information will be spread on responsible fishing techniques, the new management plans, and regulations, to ensure compliance.

Monitoring

- Monitoring committees should be formed in district and other local levels to monitor compliance, NGOs should be part of these monitoring committees.

Conflict resolution

- District level fisher organizations, boat owner associations, fisheries department and other local level organizations should sit together to resolve if a conflict arise.

Reviewing management plans

- Representatives of fishers, researchers should do joint research year around to assess the status.

2.3.2. Sea Cucumber group

Suggested regulations

- Remove three species - *Holothuria atra*, *H. scabra*, *Bohadschia marmorata* - from Schedule 1 (of WLPA⁵) and allow controlled harvest
- The authorities may provide licences for sea cucumber divers.

Communication and voluntary compliance

- The village panchayat and sea cucumber divers associations and unions will conduct series of meetings at the regional, taluk, district and state levels to make the people aware of these rules and regulations
- The above mentioned village level institutions will be used to convince the people to comply with these restrictions.

⁵ The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (WLPA) under which protected areas are declared, also has several Schedules providing a range of protection for endangered species. Schedule 1 provides maximum protection.

Monitoring

- Initially the government can come up with detailed rules with the participation of the fishing community. Later to supervise the implementation of these acts and rules, the community will establish monitoring committees in all the villages.

Dispute settlement

- They will attempt to solve problems at the village level; inter-village disputes will be handled by the union; more complex problems will require the law to intervene.

Review

- There should be an apex committee of fishermen, community leaders, monitoring committee members, members from NGOs working in this field; and scientists; to be established with the help of government who supervises all the rules and regulations.

2.3.3. Seaweed collectors group

Existing regulations/demands

- Various ban periods exist in seaweed collection in several villages
- They also do not collect Schedule 1 (banned) species like turtle, dugong, sea cucumber, sea lizard, sea horse, and certain types of chanks.

Suggested regulations/demands

- Government must issue identity card for the collectors
- Rotate their collection areas after consulting with the rest of the community.

Communication and voluntary compliance

- Village trade union meeting, village level panchayat⁶ meeting, Gram panchayat meeting, community-based groupings (such as Mutturayar), district union meetings will be used to communicate these rules and regulations to the rest of the community
- Village level restrictions and panchayat rules and regulations will be used to make people comply with these rules and regulations.

Monitoring

- The community will form a monitoring team to protect the islands; those breaking the law will be reported to the village heads.

Dispute settlement

- If it is a village level problem they will try to solve it in village meetings or Union meetings. In case it cannot be addressed in all these places, then they will approach the police to look at the issue.

2.4. Training material

Training materials developed by ICSF were translated into the local language, Tamil and shared with participants. The materials were a booklet on EAF; a brochure on Small-Scale Fisheries: Their Contribution to Food Security, Poverty Alleviation and Sustainability; and a leaflet on the Draft Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the context of food security and poverty eradication.

2.5. Study

The ICSF Trust initiated a study to document the traditional knowledge of fishing communities in two villages in the Gulf of Mannar region. These villages were selected based on discussions during the

⁶ Local level administrative unit.

training programme. The villagers identified two islands (Appa and Krusidai islands) located close to these villages which the community depends on for their livelihoods, and documentation of the species, and traditional mapping was undertaken in these islands. The study was completed by August⁷; the study results were then verified and vetted by the fishing communities, especially from the two villages where the traditional knowledge documentation was undertaken, during discussions organized in September. The study was edited and published in October 2014.

2.6. Follow-up activities in Gulf of Mannar (India)

Training programmes were earlier conducted in two locations (Pamban and Ramanathapuram) with a focus on developing community-led proposals for resource management. As a supporting activity, a study on the traditional knowledge of fishers was carried out by ICSF in the Gulf of Mannar.

As a next step, a Workshop was organized in Chennai, the state capital, in June 2014, bringing together government officials from the State Planning Commission, the State Departments of Environment, Fisheries, Forest & Wildlife, and scientists from research institutions working in the area, NGOs and community members.

The objective of the workshop was to discuss the issues connected with the livelihoods of fishing communities through seaweed resource management. The workshop included a general presentation on the Gulf of Mannar followed by presentations from community representatives and presentations from experts followed by intensive discussion. The participants included officials from experts and research institutions working in the area, NGOs and community members.

2.6.1. Report of follow-up workshop

The first part was an overview presentation on conservation, sustainable use and management of marine resources in the Gulf of Mannar National Park and Biosphere Reserve. This was followed by four members of the community (two women seaweed collectors and two fishermen) presenting their viewpoints on the conflicts in the region and suggestions on the way forward. Expert presentations were on culturing of seaweeds, sea ranching (of sea cucumbers), LMMA, participatory governance and fisheries. During the presentations and subsequently as well, there were detailed discussions on many points that were raised. Some of the major conclusions were:

- The government had a responsibility to protect and conserve resources for future generations as well. The local community knew about the place much more than scientists as they had been there for a long time. The government and scientists would look at how to support the community in improving livelihoods.
- This meeting was to understand the needs of the community. However, it was also necessary for the community to think of additional livelihood options. Developing culturing / sea ranching techniques would take time and it had to be ensured that others did not enter into their field.
- A request was made for identity cards for the women seaweed collectors. This request was accepted and also the District Collector was asked to be in touch regularly with the community to sort out local issues.
- The points made about the fisheries sector as a whole and the question of applicability of wildlife legislation on the marine sector must be considered.

2.6.2. Recommendations

- Recognition of seaweed collectors as a unique group of women fishers all over India, provision of identification cards to women seaweed collectors by the fisheries department (a first time initiative, to be included in the Policy Note).
- Collector to look at Section 3(1) d of FRA for Rights of Access to communities.

⁷ There has been a slight delay in the completion of the study as we were waiting for permission from the Government of Tamil Nadu to undertake the study, and do ground verification of information.

- Identification of areas being used by the community in the National Park area before declaring inviolate.
- Proposal on sea cucumber ranching from CMFRI to be prepared and sent to MoEF, supported by Planning Commission.
- CMSCRI to research further and advise on culture of seaweeds.
- Community to give suggestions on alternate / allied employment options that they would like to take up.
- Provision of protective equipment such as gloves for the women collectors; check if use of scissors / cutters to harvest seaweed is possible.
- Exploration of seaweed collection from deeper waters (6-7m), training for diving as well as gear such as oxygen tanks.
- Collector to hold regular meetings with the community to decide about access rights as well as to look at alternate livelihoods.
- Further research on the need for a legal framework for conservation and management that is more relevant for marine areas, than using terrestrial framework.

2.6.3. Follow-up

Subsequently, post the June meeting, the minutes from the State Planning Commission report was disseminated to fishing communities in local language and discussions were held with fishing communities in Chinnapalam, Bharathi Nagar, Muthurayer meenavar kuppam, and Periyapattinam Pudukudiriupu to take forward the recommendations. There have been discussions with the District Administrative Authorities as well as the Forest Department and Fisheries Department, in implementing these recommendations.

It was noted that this has been the first time that a formal discussion has been organized between the fishing communities and different government departments on issues relating to livelihoods and conservation in the Gulf of Mannar.

3. Bangladesh - Cox's Bazar

The fishing community of Cox's Bazar, on the eastern coast of Bangladesh, are not involved in the decision making process regarding the fishery resources of the region, and their knowledge on fishing laws is inadequate.

3.1. Activities

In Cox's Bazar, ICSF's local partner, Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust (COAST) conducted several activities.

3.1.1. Community based organizations

Three community-based organizations called People's Organization (PO) were set up. This is a continuation of COAST's earlier work in the region. The POs are led and run by community members; COAST only provides technical support. At the village level, the community sets up POs with a five member management committee. These members select the Union level and Upazilla level POs. The main aim of this is to establish an alternative power structure, as the current system is not responsive to the poor and marginalized people since it is a top-down system leading to services not reaching the needy. Over time, COAST hopes that POs will help the community in bargaining with the government, boat owners association and other service providers.

3.1.2. Study

COAST has undertaken a short study on ecosystems and fishing communities of Cox's Bazar and Moheshkhali Upazila. A team from the Department of Marine Science, Chittagong University led by Professor Shahadad conducted field visits, household surveys and interviews in Cox's Bazar Town and Gurakghata in Moheshkhali. The study aimed to identify the important ecological resources in the area, and the community's understanding of the status of these resources and their role in sustainable use of the resources. The study found that in general, the community felt fisheries resources were on the decline, though some resources like mangroves were in better shape. While several restrictions on gear, season, etc. exist, the community does not follow these. The implementation of these rules by the State is also lax. While the community in general agrees that restrictions/bans etc. are required, they do not see the potential for contribution from their side in terms of co-management.

3.1.3. District level meetings

COAST also organized a meeting with the local leaders from the fisher communities. Ten leaders were selected from 3 POs and local communities. A district-level committee has been formed to supervise the project activities. In the meeting, existing challenges to the survival of small-scale fishers and possible solutions were discussed. Some advocacy strategies were discussed and it was decided that COAST will only provide technical support to the group.

3.1.4. Training programme

In November 2013, two training programmes were held in Bangladesh to enhance the capacity of fishing communities for fisheries resource management within the EAF framework; to seek recognition and support of a broader set of stakeholders in the fisheries sector for equitable, community-led approaches to fisheries resource management, through training programmes as part of this particular project.

The training programmes were held in two legs at the COAST office in Cox's Bazar in November 2013. Each programme was spread out over 3 days and was attended by a total 60 participants. The training consisted of lectures, question and answer sessions, and group discussions. The main focus of the training program was to blend both theoretical and practical knowledge related to sustainable fisheries.

In Bangladesh, the government regulates the fishery sector through licensing, area and gear restriction scheme and seasonal closures. However, a significant level of non-compliance with regulations is observed. Resource people felt that increasing fishers' awareness of the life cycle of fish is important in ensuring they stop collection of wild fry, catching of juvenile fish, and stop fishing during the breeding season. Participants discussed the issues they face like the impact of climate change, the problems they face from the boat owners etc. They also gave suggestions for capacity building of fishers. Most of the participants felt that availability of financial support would be an effective means of developing the capacity of fishers. The concept of an ecosystem approach to sustainable fisheries was also discussed.

3.1.5. National seminar

On 22 February 2014 a seminar on 'Challenges in Ensuring Access to Coastal Resources: Ecosystem and Fishing Communities of Cox's Bazar'. In this seminar speakers emphasized on ensuring access and participation of the community people, specifically the fisher people in the coastal resource management. Recommendations from the seminar, to solve these problems, were — Establishing a platform to raise fishers' voices, capacity building programmes for fishers, financial and technical support, alternative income options; and during the annual 10 day fishing ban, a special ration programme for fishers should be implemented.

3.2. Outputs

The key outputs of the training were as follows:

- Improved understanding of the existing situation of the coastal fishers and fisheries. (Most of the participants did not know about existing laws and policies regarding the fisheries; government initiatives on coastal development. They had little understanding of fisheries management.)
- Fishers learnt about their roles and rights
- Fishers gained a clear idea of the coastal resources and their sustainable utilization
- Fishers learnt about the existing fishing laws
- Problems, challenges in regards of ensuring access to the resources have been identified
- Common understanding has been built on local mobilization

A specific action plan has also been adopted to increase visibility of fishers and to address some of their problems and challenges. The plan includes expanding the Bangladesh Fish Workers' Alliance (BFWA), strengthening campaigns for setting a minimum wage in fishing, insurance coverage, getting ID cards issued for fishers, and also initiation of campaign programmes to seed awareness among fishers about the need for complying with rules and policies in fisheries sector, especially usage of gears and methods for fishing.

3.3. Training material

COAST developed and shared with the participants notes on socio-economic conditions of fishers; ecological resources of Cox's Bazar; features of ecosystem approach to resource management; problems and challenges of ecological management; community access to resources; need for capacity building of the community; sustainable fishing management; integration of ecological management; trends in fish stocks; fishing laws and regulations; advocacy methods; EAF booklet (developed by ICSF); and the Draft Voluntary Guidelines on Small-scale Fisheries.

4. Myanmar - Ayeyarwaddy Delta

4.1. Background

Till 2011, in the Ayeyarwaddy region, leasable fisheries were under the supervision of the Department of Fisheries (DOF) while the revenue from the same went to the revenue department. Fisheries management was vested with the township administration. However, in 2011, fishery laws were amended to give state and divisional governments the right to revenue from leased fisheries though the Department of Fisheries oversees the management of inland fisheries. The Department is responsible for enforcing the fisheries law, classifying inland waters (for fisheries), and auctioning leasable fisheries.

ICSF's local partner, Network Activities Group (NAG) has been working in the region since 2009, to organize and strengthen fishing communities so they can claim their fishing rights and gain economic development.

NAG has facilitated the institutional building of fishers and fisher development associations (FDA) which are set up to sustain small fishers and ensure the sustainability of the fisheries while also dealing with conflicts between resource users. Each FDA works through a network of local, district and township level organizations and with various livelihood-specific groups. Recently, regional/state authorities have mooted a co-management arrangement in areas designated as common fishing grounds.

4.2. Activities

For the current project, NAG organized a series of activities.

4.2.1. Co-management workshops

On 7 and 8 October 2013, a Fishery Co-management Workshop with Fisher Leaders was held in Pyapon, to assess the response of different stakeholders to the idea of fishery co-management. The workshop had fisher leaders from seven communities participating as well as executive members of the FDAs. Group discussions and facilitated discussions were used during the workshop to address following questions:

1. Why is a fishery co-management system required?
2. What are the benefits of co-management?
3. What is the interest of the regional government in co-management?
4. What is the interest of the Department of Fisheries in co-management?

4.2.2. Community-level meetings

NAG also organized Community-level Consultation Meetings in seven villages between 22 October and 1 November 2013 for communities to understand what a co-management system would entail and to gauge their response to such a system. The main points that emerged from the consultation meetings were:

1. Participants were amenable to setting up co-management systems in their area
2. Representation for the cluster level co-management committee
3. Roles and responsibilities of fishers, VDC, cluster-level co-management committee, and township level co-management committee were clear
4. Conservation Area was identified which is a fish breeding ground
5. Closed fishing season was identified
6. Participants decided to work towards moving gradually from illegal to legal gears

4.2.3. Co-management plan

A Workshop for Finalizing the Co-management Plan for these seven villages was held in Pyapon on 14 November 2013. During the workshop, these decisions were taken (to be implemented in the coming year):

1. To have a closed season (of the fishing ground)
2. Fence nets (a destructive gear) will be prohibited in the coming year. Plus smaller mesh size will be phased out
3. The agreed upon closed area of the fishing ground will be implemented
4. Mangrove re-plantation and rehabilitation will be carried out
5. Management mechanism including regular meeting, patrolling to halt illegal fishing practices will be put in place

4.2.4. Workshop on fishery co-management

An advocacy workshop on fishery co-management with key stakeholders in the fishery sector titled, The Second Ayeyarwaddy Regional Fishery Development Workshop (First workshop was in 2012) was organized. This was a three day long programme attended by 85 participants, held between 21 and 23 November 2013.

The key objectives of this workshop were:

- To advocate with the regional parliament to create a space for co-management in the fishery law
- To advocate with the regional government to recognize the collective efforts of small-scale fishers and consider piloting the co-management plan under the research category of the 2012 fishery law

The first day of the workshop was focused on co-management and was designed to be participatory learning sessions through sharing international and local experiences. The second day of the workshop concluded with a panel discussion with various stakeholders. The last day of the workshop focused on organizing the regional and sub-regional small-scale FDAs. Current status of fisher associations in each township, organization structures and their activities were presented at the beginning of the session and the next steps for formation of regional small-scale FDAs were discussed.

4.3. Outputs/Recommendations

- Co-management system should be piloted together by fishery groups and the Department of Fisheries (DOF) under the research categories of the 2012 Ayeyarwaddy Fresh Water Fishery Law
- Demarcation of the fishing grounds should be carried out together by DOF, Land Record Department and local communities
- Policy consultation process with the primary and key stakeholders should be conducted for improving the Fishery Law
- 2/2012 Fresh Water Fishery law should be known clearly by fishing communities and awareness raising activities should be conducted
- The lessons learnt from international experiences such as Cambodia should be applied in future plans for co-management
- Engagement platform among stakeholders in the fishery sector should be established for trust building
- Fishery Law need to be improved and should have space for co-management
- DoF should form Fisheries Development Associations (FDAs) at villages, townships and district-levels
- Formation of township-level associations should be supported by existing Fishery Associations

- Formation of district level association should be started from network model and then to the formation of better organization structure
- Establishment of Ayeyarwaddy Region Fisher Associations

4.4. Training material

Training materials developed by ICSF were translated into the local language, Burmese and shared with participants. The materials were a booklet on EAF; a brochure on Small-Scale Fisheries: Their Contribution to Food Security, Poverty Alleviation and Sustainability; and a leaflet on the Draft Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the context of food security and poverty eradication. Training manual on co-management was also produced.

4.5. Follow-up

As a follow-up to the training programme, to set up co-management systems in Myanmar, fisher representatives from the Ayeyarwaddy region of Myanmar (who also attended the programme) visited Cambodia in March 2014 as part of the BOBLME-ICSF exposure trip. The purpose was to understand how the community fisheries have worked in Cambodia and to see how this can be applied in the Myanmar context. Besides this, the Parliamentarians from Myanmar also visited Cambodia independently to understand the community fisheries.

NAG also proposes to carry out further awareness sessions in community level regarding the co-management issues, and lobby the regional Parliament and government to enact community fishery law in the coming months.

4.6. Follow up project (April-June)

The current extended project's main objective is to accelerate the momentum of progress regarding fishery co-management by providing appropriate training and awareness sessions on co-management as well as establishment of a regional network to promote SSF and co-management.

Activities

During the reporting period the following activities were implemented;

1. Fishery Co-management Training for fisher leaders: 26 fisher leaders from Pyapon and Daydaye Township attended.
2. Fishery Co-management Awareness sessions in pilot area (6 villages of Daydaye Township)
3. Establishment of Regional Small Scale Fishery Network and promoting fishery Co-management was done by holding a two day workshop with 70 participants from 20 townships representing the 23 CSO.

Outputs

As a result of the capacity building training, enhanced network platform and advocacy actions through the project, the following immediate results were achieved;

1. Ayeyarwaddy Regional Small Scale Fishery Network was established with the participation of small scale fishing communities.
2. Regional Government was willing to promote the fishery co-management in Ayeyarwaddy Region; this year, the regional government allowed NAG to pilot the fishery co-management in Dayadye.
3. Regional Parliament agreed to enact the related fishery law with focus on Community Fishery.
4. Small scale fishing communities start being aware of the Golden Middle Way - a combination of top down and bottom up elements, for improving the fishery resource governance.

5. CSOs under Ayeyarwaddy Regional Small Scale Fishery Network agreed to promote the fishery co-management in their respected areas

4.7. Recommendations

The common goals of the regional SSF Network were developed:

1. Sustainable Livelihood of small scale fishing communities with better working environment.
2. Advocating with Government for Pro-poor Fishery Policies.
3. Fishing Communities' Rights to participate in Policy Making Process and Fishery Resource Management.
4. Working towards the protection of small scale fishing communities including fish workers who are working on offshore fishing vessels.
5. Educating and awareness raising on Fishery policies, rules and regulations.

5. Indonesia - Aceh province, Aceh Jaya district

5.1. Background

FAO had implemented a fisheries co-management programme in the coastal areas of four districts of Aceh Province, including Aceh Jaya District focusing on building stakeholders' (fishers and fishery department employees) capacity from 2007 to 2010. At the end of the third year, the programme helped establish five co-management centres in the west coast districts of Aceh. In an evaluation of the five co-management centres, it was found that there was a significant improvement in the centre in Aceh Jaya District in terms of capacity of stakeholders in consolidating and merging their business and thus contributing substantially to the economy of the district. However, the participants in these co-management centres were not fully familiar with the problems and difficulties of small-scale fishery nationally and globally. The need to fill in the gaps with another capacity building programme was felt.

5.2. Activities

The three day training programme facilitated by ICSF and conducted by the Centre for Study of Marine Customary Law and Fisheries Policy (Pushal-KP) of the University of Syiah Kuala (Unsyiah), Banda Aceh, in 26-28 November 2013 was tailored specifically to the needs of representatives of the five fisheries co-management centres. A total of 30 participants were present at the programme.

The first day of the training programme included presentations by resource persons, and discussions on Small Scale Fisheries, fishery resources and ecosystems. The second day had the participants divided into groups representing the conservation areas in the five co-management centres. The groups listed the positive and negative changes in their co-management realms after the FAO programme ended in June 2010 and spelt out the plans they were making to enhance their activities and their conservation areas. The third day had presentations from some of the local government officials and finally each group presented their recommendations.

5.3. Recommendations

5.3.1. Aceh Besar group

Need to strengthen human resource and organization (of government, traditional institutions, and fishermen community)

- The Implementation of Qanun No. 7 year 2010 on Fishery
- The formulation of Governor and District leaders Decrees on Small Scale Fisheries
- The Government Regulation Draft (RPP) on the Management of Fishery resources revised from 12 miles becomes 200 miles such as RPP Oil and gas
- Supportive infrastructures and equipment of small scale fishermen (ports, community hall, jetty, etc.)
- Supervision (patrol) equipment of illegal fishing, fish bombing, trawl)
- Good collaboration with: water police, navy, Oceanography and Fisheries Department, Supervision Community Group, Panglima Laot⁸ Lhok
- Fishermen Cooperative

5.3.2. Aceh Jaya group

- Activate Community Motivator
- Re-organize the KRL/KPL
- Strengthen the customary law

⁸ Customary institution in the fishing community

- Coastal tourism
- Co-management among Panglima Laot, Dinas Kelautan dan Perikanan, Tourism Department, Fishers, Police, Village Supervisors and Village Heads.
- Regular meetings
- The training for fishermen and their wives
- Syariah Cooperative and its socialization
- The clarification of Decree on Regional Management
- Activate Supervision Community Group
- The government programme to support SSF

5.3.3. Aceh Barat/Nagan Raya group

- The improvement of small scale fishermen human resource in managing fishery sector and sustainable development
- Build communication with government, other Panglima Laot (sea commanders) and law enforcement apparatus
- Management of post harvesting options to support and increase income generation
- Commit to reduce poverty rate
- Strengthen sustainable supervision of conservation areas

5.4. Training material

Pushal-KP developed several training materials. These were on:

1. The BOBLME Project: Making a Strategic Action Plan for Indonesia by Dr Mukhlisin, Head of Fisheries Resources at Marine Fisheries Faculty, Syiah Kuala University
2. The Role of government in management of Small Scale Fisheries towards responsible and sustainable fisheries in Aceh Jaya district by H. Teuku Imran, SE
3. The Advocacy for Small Scale Fisheries management by M Adli Abdullah
4. Development and sustainable of Small Scale Fisheries in Kuala Daya, Aceh Jaya Region) by Azwar Anas
5. Development and sustainable of Small Scale Fisheries in Lhok Rigaih, Aceh Jaya District by Keuchik Juwaini
6. Development of Small Scale Fisheries priorities in Aceh Jaya by Keuchik Juwaini
7. Development of Small Scale Fisheries priorities in Aceh Besar by Bob (Nazmi)
8. Why Small Scale Fisheries is good by John Kurien
9. Customary Sea Law in Aceh by Pw Baharuddin (Vice Panglima Laot Aceh)
10. Rescue issues of fisheries resources in Aceh by Marzuki
11. Development of Small Scale Fisheries priorities in West Aceh and Nagan Raya by Rusma
12. Development and sustainable of Small Scale Fisheries in KPL Nagan Raya and West Aceh Regions by Yusarlis

5.5. Follow-up

These recommendations are expected to support the implementation of the planned UN-FAO Programme on IGSSF in 2014/15.

6. Thailand

6.1. Background

Thailand has a coastline of nearly 2600 km, with an exclusive economic zone of nearly 316,000 km² in both the Gulf of Thailand and Andaman Sea. There are 23 coastal provinces, of which seventeen border the Gulf of Thailand (East Coast), and six are along the Andaman Sea (West Coast). Agriculture and fisheries constitute the main livelihood option of the Thai people (35 per cent) and it is estimated that fisheries accounts for 2.5 per cent of the total gross domestic product (GDP). Rapid mechanization and over exploitation of resources has had an impact on the marine ecosystem since the 1980s, a situation made worse by the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. Post tsunami, many fishing communities in the country realized the importance of protecting their natural resources and many of them initiated their own management plans to conserve these ecosystems. The Department of Fisheries (DoF) and the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) are the two major governmental departments working for the development of fisheries in Thailand. DoF plays an active role in promotion of fisheries and aquaculture whereas DMCR has been given the mandate to develop appropriate regulations in order to achieve updated and effective managerial action with the objective of looking after and conserving the nation's fragile marine resources. Recently a new bill which emphasizes marine resource management with greater community participation has been proposed by DMCR and is under consideration by the cabinet. The draft Act calls for setting up of local management bodies for the protection of marine and coastal resources

The objectives of the training programme initiative were:

1. To develop the capacity of fisheries-related state departments, NGOs and local administrative bodies on multi-stakeholder collaboration in ecosystem based marine and coastal resource management,
2. To draw lessons from the workshop and prepare a handbook of directions on marine and coastal resource management, and
3. To apply the lessons from the training programme to formulate policies to facilitate sustainable ecosystem based marine and coastal resource management in the future.

ICSF's local partner in Thailand for this project was Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF), an NGO that organizes rural communities that are dependent on natural resources for livelihood and food security.

6.2. Activities

6.2.1. Consultations

Two consultations were organized with government agencies, non-government organizations, and sectors related to marine and coastal resource management.

1. First meeting on September 25, 2013: The objectives of this activity were to discuss with partners, to appraise them of the initiative and to see their suggestions and support, including follow-ups, organizing a working group and conducting a meeting for developing an implementation plan and assignment, as well as an agreement on a task force group and responsibilities.
2. Second meeting on November 26, 2013: The objectives of this activity were to follow up work in the field, report the progress in each case study, review and discuss documents related to ecosystem-based coastal resource management.

6.2.2. Survey and consultation

Survey and consultation with target areas: The objectives of this activity were to collect baseline information in the target areas, to better understand the situation and to highlight the key lesson learnt. Detail of activities:

1. Survey and consultation with the target area in Satun province on November 3-5, 2013 at the Patra marine national park.
2. Survey and consultation with the target area in Ranong province on November 10-12, 2013 with the Muangkluang sub-district Administrative Organisation.
3. Survey and consultation with the target area in Trang Province on November 27, 2013 at Namrab village, Bangsuk sub-district, Kantrang District, Kapor district.
4. Survey and consultation with the target area in Pangnga province on December 6, 2013 at Tasanook village, Marui sub-district, Tabpud district.

6.2.3. The knowledge exchange forum

The knowledge exchange forum was titled “BOBLME training on ecosystem based management in Thailand.” and was conducted 18 –20 March 2014 in the Jaofha room, Krabi Maritime Park Spa Resort, Krabi province in South Thailand. There were a total of 45 participants in the forum, comprising of 15 women and 30 men, including representatives from governments, NGOs, academia and community.

6.3. Output/recommendations

Outputs

Given below is the summary of lessons learnt from the workshop and from the case studies.

Case study 1: Trang Province. Post-tsunami, the small-scale fisher folk of four villages: Koh Muk, Nam Rap, Chang Lang, and Kian Tung Koo, came together and established a “Four village marine conservation zone” locally known as “Lae Sae Ban”. An area of sea covering around 27,000 rai (10,675 acres) has been designated as a conservation zone called the Four village marine conservation zone. There are agreements about making use of the sea and its resources.

The full case study is available here: Marine Protected Areas in Thailand: Time for a sea change: A study of the effectiveness of biodiversity conservation measures and Marine Protected Areas along Southern Thailand’s Andaman ea coastline.

Video clip on the case study: http://www.4shared.com/video/xkwi58egba/_online.html

Case study 2: Ma Rui sub-district in Thab Put district, Phang Nga province. This study deals with the conflicts between the oriental hard clam pickers and oyster cultivators and how it was resolved through negotiations. The villagers from Tha Krang village, Tha Nuer village, Tha Klan village, and Tha Tai village, came together to organize themselves for community based resource management activities, specifically to map the mangrove ecosystem and rehabilitate it.

Video clip on the case study: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3AeD67f33O8&feature=youtu.be>

Case study 3: In Satun province, the decision to stop destructive fishing practices in certain areas actually was not imposed on the commercial fishers; rather it was based on a participatory decision-making process that involved them at all stages.

1. Lessons learnt from the workshop

- Good multi-stakeholder ecosystem based marine and coastal resource management must start with understanding of problems in the ecosystem/area. Analysis of stakeholders, internal and external factors, favourable and unfavourable factors of ecological management must be done first and then they should mutually define goals and strategies or direction for proceeding towards ecosystem based marine and coastal resource management.

- Multi-stakeholder ecosystem based marine and coastal resource management should have a distinct operational direction and should use appropriate tools while working within a community or building networks depending on the level of awareness, understanding, knowledge and experience of the community. Stakeholders should also mutually define the ultimate goal that they want to achieve, which will then lead to concerted action.

2. Lessons learnt from the case studies

- A primary requirement is a host organization/local organization that knows the local conditions well and continuously plays a role in coordinating with other stakeholders at the grassroots level
- While the community is the primary player and the mode of operation is largely cultural, traditional cultural practices have undergone changes. External support would facilitate partnerships resulting in cooperation and greater participation and also play an important role in ensuring effective operational mechanisms.
- A strong database would help in monitoring and reduction of conflicts, enable development of strategic planning to address the needs of the stakeholders and reduce overlap of plans, activities and budget.
- Integration of resource management with action plan of local administration organisation and collaboration of all stakeholders will lead to reduction of conflicts and to greater mutual respect.
- Access and awareness of potential of all concerned sectors, and promotion and provision of learning processes, capacity building and participatory processes of consultation, would help develop processes of sharing and a sense of ownership.
- Gender based management approach would not only foster participation of men and women but also enable women to take part in sharing and learning and ensure that activities and rules developed are favourable to both men and women.
- Applicants of community based ecosystem management must have good understanding and a clear picture of the future of everything in the ecosystem, keeping in mind the sustainability of the system.

Recommendations

- **On policy:** there should be advocacy and collaboration with concerned organisations on multi-stakeholder ecosystem based marine and coastal resource management by organizing forums on public policies on 'ecosystem based resource management' where decision-makers can share ideas and propose clear action plan of each organisation.
- **On implementation:** results of this workshop, especially on the concept on multi-stakeholder ecosystem based marine and coastal resource management, and on the mechanisms, processes, methodologies and techniques that make multi-stakeholder ecosystem based marine and coastal resource management possible, should be documented and disseminated to state agencies, NGOs, academic institutions and community organisations as operational guidelines.
- **Continuous evaluation:** If a handbook is developed on the mechanism, process, methodologies and techniques on multi-stakeholder ecosystem based marine and coastal resource management, and distributed to the target group, another workshop of this kind should be organized to assess if the target group has truly applied this concept in their area and to analyse the experience. It will be an evaluation of the handbook for further improvement.

6.4. Training material

Documents and materials distributed during the forum meeting:

- Three case studies including videos:
 - Case study of sustainable fisheries management based on a participatory ecosystem: four village conservation zones in the Hat Chao Mai national park in Trang province.
 - Case study of Satun marine conservation zone based on participatory ecosystem.
 - Case study of coastal and marine ecosystem-based management in Marui district, Phangnga province.
- List of documents prepared for ecosystem-based coastal resource management and related international conventions and laws
- Resumed session of the technical consultation on the International Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in english and in thai

6.5. Follow-up

The Sustainable Development Foundation (SDF) plans to undertake a training similar to training of trainers (TOT) for NGO representatives and fish worker organization leaders on the implementation of the Small-scale Fisheries Guidelines (SSF Guidelines)

7. Exposure trip to Cambodia

From 17 to 20 March, ICSF along with the Fisheries Administration (FiA), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Government of Cambodia, organized a study visit to Cambodia for six people from Myanmar. Four of them were from the fishing community from the Ayeyarwaddy region, one person was with a government officie and one person was from Network Activities Group (NAG) who also aided in translating to and from Burmese. In addition, one person from ICSF was also present.

The study visit was a follow up to the BOBLME supported workshop, 'Enhancing Capacities of Fishing Communities for Resource Management', that was held in Pathein township, Ayeyarwaddy region in Myanmar. The workshop was conducted in November 2013 by ICSF in collaboration with NAG. The study visit participants from Myanmar had also participated in the workshop. A FiA official had also participated in the Pathein workshop. The fishing community in Myanmar had expressed an interest in taking forward their understanding about the fisheries management practices in Cambodia.

After visiting FiA in Phnom Penh, the visitors travelled to Kampot province on the coast. Here the group visited the Trapaeng Sangke community fisheries. From Kampot, the group returned to Phnom Penh for a night before heading out to Siem Reap. In Siem Reap, two community fisheries on the Tonle Sap were visited – Kampong Phluk and Kandaek.

At each place we met the head of the community fisheries and from 5 to 10 members, including 2-4 women. However, getting participation from many people, especially the women, was difficult. Though the FiA officials tried to get everyone to talk, many were shy and preferred to have the headman speak on their behalf. Occasionally one or two of the others spoke. Information on the structure, setting up, functioning of the community fisheries was shared. Members spoke of difficulties of the process and challenges they continue to face. However, they indicated, overall the community fisheries system has benefitted the community though the extent of benefit was unclear.

7.1. Output

The participants from Myanmar were very interested in how the legal system is set up to support CFs as well as the administrative aspects. They shared that the legal set up in Myanmar currently is not amenable to such a community fisheries system since each region has its own laws. The NAG representative felt that it was useful in terms of understanding how fisheries management can be done through closed and open season, gear restriction, species restriction and fish conservation areas. In addition, the group, he says, was able to see what a CF is about beyond the definition on paper (a co-management system arrangement between the government and group of local people). It was heartening to note the support the Cambodian government is extending to communities and how they are able to effectively collaborate on fishing ground boundary demarcation, patrolling and problem solving.

7.2. Follow up

Independent of this project, government officials from Myanmar have visited Cambodia to learn about community fisheries and officials from Cambodia's FiA have participated several times in workshops in Myanmar – in Ayeyarwaddy and in Rakhine Regions. Policy level meetings have been held in Ayeyardwaddy delta and Rakhine on co-management.

Now Rakhine region is in the process of developing its fresh water fishery law. With inputs from the exposure visit and interactions between government officials of Myanmar and Cambodia, it has been decided to devote more time and space for co-management in the fishery law process. The fisheries law of Cambodia has been translated into Burmese as an aid to drafting the law. In addition, Ayeyarwaddy Region also decided to develop a related fisheries law where they will place

emphasis on the co-management component (Ayeyarwaddy already has fresh water fishery law since 2012). Ayeyarwaddy Regional Minister has requested NAG to assist in selecting fresh water fishery areas to pilot the co-management processes.

8. Project recommendations and learning

ICSF-BOBLME training programmes on Enhancing capacities of fishing communities for resource management, was the first initiative of ICSF to organize local level training programme in different countries, especially focusing on initiatives for discussions on participatory resource management. The training programmes brought together fishing communities, policy makers, and researchers to discuss resource management options in a number of these countries, and also were used as a means to document existing community initiatives for sustainable use, conservation and resource management.

One of the key factors behind the success of this project was the process involved in designing these workshops, starting from the planning stage where all the implementing partners were involved. There were different kinds of documentation /studies that were also helpful during the course of the training programmes, which helped feed into the programmes. In the case of Myanmar, the initiative along with the exchange programme led to a on the need to implement co-management initiatives in the province, while in the case of India – in the Gulf of Mannar - this was one of the first initiatives to have top level government officials with the fishing community and scientific researchers as well. In the case of Sundarbans, this was one of the first initiatives to document issues across the different blocks, and to get an overall perspective covering both the tiger reserve areas and outside.

The model of engaging with resource people, community representatives and government officials has proved helpful. The training material, especially those translated into local languages, was very much appreciated. It would, however, be useful to contextualize the training material especially on ecosystem approach to the local situation as well.

The regional labour dialogue was one of the first of its kind organized in the region, and helped get together all the key stakeholders and decision-makers. This has also led to initiating follow-ups in Myanmar to look at the labour supplying nation as well.

ICSF will take forward some of these activities especially the training programmes in Myanmar, Thailand and India with more exchange and trainings, besides undertaking studies in Myanmar focusing on migrant labour issues.

Through the implementation of the training programmes, it was also clear that there is a need for regular follow-up and information dissemination amongst communities at the local level, to understand the local dynamics in resource management. It was also required to understand the various other factors that play a key role for small-scale fishing communities to participate in community based resource management, especially focusing on aspects related to basic facilities, food security, challenges faced in resource management, and access to resources.

9. References

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Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand are working together through the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) Project to lay the foundations for a coordinated programme of action designed to better the lives of the coastal populations through improved regional management of the Bay of Bengal environment and its fisheries.

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