



**STRATEGIC PLAN OF ACTION ON
ASEAN COOPERATION ON FISHERIES
2021-2025**

Final

ASEAN SECTORAL WORKING GROUP ON FISHERIES

1. Introduction

The Strategic Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on Fisheries (SPA-Fisheries) was adopted by the 38th AMAF Meeting in 2016 to ensure that strategic thrusts and action programmes of the Vision and Strategic Plan of the ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry (SP-FAF 2016-2025) relevant to the fisheries sector are implemented during the first five years covering 2016-2020. The SPA-Fisheries (2016-2020) contained 65 activities and sub-activities that are aligned with the 6 strategic thrusts and 19 action programmes of the SP-FAF 2016-2025. To assess the progress of implementation of the strategic plans of food, agriculture and forestry sector, the Special SOM-40th AMAF in 2019 requested all relevant Working Groups (WGs) in coordination with the ASEAN Secretariat to review their respective strategic plans and recommend appropriate activities for the SPA 2021-2025.

The ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGFi) has made good progress in the implementation of the SP-FAF 2016-2020. From the lists of 65 activities and sub-activities, 31% are completed, 43% are on-going implementation and 26% remain unimplemented. Some of the notable accomplishments include the adoption of several regional guidelines relating to traceability system for aquaculture products, catch documentation scheme, an early warning system for aquatic animal health emergencies and cold chain management for seafood. The issuance of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Common Position on the Inclusion of Commercially-exploited Aquatic Species to CITES Appendix, including the Joint Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Combating IUU Fishing and Enhancing the Competitiveness of ASEAN Fish and Fishery Products were also accomplished. Some of the on-going activities are focusing on the conduct of ASEAN General Fisheries Policy feasibility study, developing guidelines and action plan to combat antimicrobials resistance (AMR) in aquaculture, pilot-testing of electronic catch documentation scheme, establishing the Multilateral Arrangement for the Mutual Recognition of Agri-food Standards and Conformity Assessment, and establishing the ASEAN Network for Combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing. Despite these achievements, limited progress has been noted in the implementation of activities relating on harmonising accreditation, inspection and certification processes, fishery product standard development, harmonising SPS measures on aquatic animal quarantine and health certification, and climate change hazard risk assessment.

ASWGFi acknowledges the lingering COVID-19 pandemic has caused serious impacts on our lives and economy, including our fisheries activities and industries. To ensure programme continuity and further support the implementation of the Vision and SP-FAF (2016-2025), the SPA-Fisheries 2021-2025 was developed taking into account the on-going and unimplemented activities and sub-activities from the previous SPA. It also takes into account recent developments in the ASEAN fisheries sector (e.g. ASEAN Chairmanship priorities and establishment of the Expert Working Group on ASEAN Good Aquaculture Practices).

2. ASEAN Cooperation on Fisheries

The fisheries sector is vital to food and nutritional security, economy and livelihood of the people in the ASEAN region. It accounts for 18% of the global fisheries production and 40% of the animal protein supplies of the population. It is also an important source of export earnings valued at US\$ 1.95 billion in 2018 and a source of income and livelihood for more than 10 million people directly engaged in fishing and aquaculture.

The fisheries sector is one of the priority sectors for ASEAN economic integration. Most of the region's fish stocks are heavily exploited, while marine ecosystems such as, mangroves, and sea-grasses, and coral reefs are severely degraded. The problem of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and the plethora of effects of climate change further exacerbate the problem of overfishing and overstressed aquatic ecosystems. Moreover, the stringent trade measures and emerging concerns (e.g. traceability, forced labor, and human trafficking issues) pose a serious threat to the competitiveness of fish and fishery products in the region. While aquaculture is often seen as a key compensation measure where impacts on fisheries are unavoidable, it is often constrained by several factors relating to water availability, water pollution, and over-intensive farming practices. Promoting the long-term sustainable development of Southeast Asia's fishery resources would require not only effective national policies in place but also regional cooperative approaches considering the common-pool nature of fisheries resources.

Under the Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry in ASEAN, the ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGF) was established to oversee the development and implementation of the relevant programme and activities in the fisheries sector with the support from the following sub-working groups: i) ASEAN Fisheries Consultative Forum (AFCF); ii) ASEAN Shrimp Alliance (ASA); iii) Fisheries Consultative Group of the ASEAN-SEAFDEC Strategic Partnership (FCG/ASSP); and iv) the Expert Working Group on ASEAN Good Aquaculture Practices (EWG-GAqP).

3. Strategic Plan of Action for ASEAN Cooperation on Fisheries, 2021-2025

The goal of the SPA-Fisheries 2021-2025 is to ensure a competitive, inclusive, resilient and sustainable fisheries sector contributing towards economic growth, poverty alleviation, food security and nutrition in the ASEAN region.

Building on the progress achieved by the previous strategic plan, the SPA-Fisheries 2021-2025 continues the strategic thrusts and action programmes of the Vision and Strategic Plan of ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry 2016-2025 that remain relevant to the fisheries sector. It includes activities that were initiated from the previous SPA- Fisheries 2016-2020 but not completed, those previously planned but not yet implemented, and new activities that take into account recent developments of the fisheries sector in the region. The strategic thrusts and its corresponding action programmes and activities are provided in **Annex 1**.

4. Implementation Arrangement

The ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGF_i) will implement the relevant activities of the SPA-Fisheries (2021-2025), with the support from its technical sub-working groups. Country Lead may be assigned to steer and initiate the implementation of a particular activity or priority deliverable, in coordination with the ASEAN Secretariat. Priority activities may be funded by AMS and/or through collaboration with Dialogue Partners and International and Regional Organisations. The progress of the implementation activities and priority deliverables will be reported in the annual meetings of ASWGF_i and SOM-AMAF, while a final review will be conducted in 2025.

STRATEGIC PLAN OF ACTION (SPA) FOR THE ASEAN COOPERATION IN FISHERIES (2021- 2025)

SECTOR : AGRICULTURE
 SUB-SECTOR: FISHERIES
 RESPONSIBLE WORKING GROUP: ASEAN Sectoral Working Group on Fisheries (ASWGFi)

Strategic Thrust 1: Enhance quantity and quality of fisheries and aquaculture production with “green” technologies, sustainable resource management systems and minimise pre- and post-harvest losses and waste.

Activities/Sub-activities	ASEAN Bodies/ Lead Country	Timeline	Output Indicators
<i>Action Programme 1.1 Identify infrastructure investment and technology requirements to increase production and, promote technology adoption and capacity building programme to reduce post-production losses, and address investment needs.</i>			
1.1.1 Stock take on the infrastructure investment and technology requirements of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors.	ASWGFi AFCF	2021-2025	List of infrastructure investment and technology requirements for fisheries and aquaculture sectors.
1.1.1.1 Consultation with relevant stakeholders to identify and address investment needs (e.g. invite private sectors and small farmers to present investment needs in fisheries to the AFCF meeting)			
1.1.2 Conduct regional assessment on the efficient utilization of fisheries resources and in reducing post-harvest losses.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Assessment report is completed.
1.1.3 Promote the implementation of the Regional Guidelines on Cold Chain Management for Seafood	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Number of workshops conducted and number of personnel trained
<i>Action Programme 1.2 Develop new and appropriate technologies, best practices and management systems to ensure food safety and address health/disease and environmental issues, particularly in the fast growing aquaculture sectors.</i>			
1.2.1 Review and revise (if necessary) the ASEAN Guidelines for the Use of Chemical in Aquaculture and Measures to Eliminate the Use of Harmful Chemical.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Revised Guideline is endorsed by SOM-AMAF

1.2.2	Pilot testing of the ASEAN Guidelines for Standard Operating Procedures for Responsible Movement of the Live Aquatic Animals in selected AMS.	ASWGFi Thailand	2021-2025	SOP is pilot tested in three (3) selected AMS.
1.2.3	Promote the implementation of the regional technical guidelines on early warning system for aquatic animal health emergencies.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	No of workshop conducted
1.2.4	Conduct Regional Study on the Outlook of COVID-19 impacts on fisheries and aquaculture in Southeast Asian Countries.	ASWGFi	2021	Report on the regional outlook.
<i>Action Programme 1.3 Development adequate capacity of AMS in implementing specific measures to support more sustainable fisheries.</i>				
1.3.1	Conduct Training Needs Assessment to identify current demand for knowledge and skills needed for a sustainable fisheries development.	ASWGFi FCG/ASSP	2021-2025	Training Needs Assessment is completed.
1.3.2	Organise capacity building for AMSs in implementing the specific measures to support more sustainable fisheries.	ASWGFi FCG/ASSP	2021-2025	Number training/workshop completed. or
1.3.2.1	Conduct regional training/workshop on the application of GIS and Remote Sensing Technology in the management of inland fisheries and aquaculture.			
<i>Action Programme 1.4. Examine and improve policy settings as necessary to ensure that they do not distort incentives for output increases and new technology adoption while ensuring that they incorporate fully the value of environmental assets and costs of resource depletion.</i>				
1.4.1	Develop recommendations on the ASEAN General Fisheries Policy Feasibility Study Report.	ASWGFi Ad-Hoc Task Force AGFP	2021-2025	Policy Recommendation is endorsed by SOM-AMAF
1.4.2	Enhance regional Fishery Information Systems (FIS) and mechanisms to facilitate sharing, exchange and compilation of statistics and information that are required at the sub-regional and regional level.	ASWGFi FCG/ASSP	2021-2025	Report outlining the gaps and recommendations to enhance FIS. List of indicators on sustainable fisheries is developed.
1.4.2.1	Conduct regional technical consultation to review existing FIS and relevant statistics, identify gaps, and standardise the definition and classification and data analysis.			
1.4.2.2	Develop simple and practical indicators in supporting planning and monitoring of sustainable fisheries.			

1.4.3 Strengthen the knowledge and management of Marine debris in ASEAN Fisheries sector (Capture fisheries and aquaculture)	ASWGFi	2021-2025	
1.4.3.1 Organise workshop on sharing information and best practices on the management of Marine debris in AMSs Fisheries sector (Capture fisheries and aquaculture)			Regional workshop is organised.
1.4.3.2 Develop ASEAN guidelines on management of Marine debris in AMS Fisheries sector (Capture fisheries and aquaculture)			Regional guidelines is endorsed by SOM-AMAF
1.4.3.3. Implement ASEAN guidelines on management of Marine debris in the AMS Fisheries sector (Capture fisheries and aquaculture)			Country report on the implementation of the guideline.

Strategic Thrust 2: Enhance trade facilitation, economic integration and market access

Activities/Sub-activities	ASEAN Bodies/ Lead Country	Timeline	Output Indicators
<i>Action Programme 2.1 Identify and eliminate non-tariff measures (NTMs) that have no economic or scientific rationale and reinforce efforts to improve trade facilitation and revise, as appropriate, trade-impeding regulatory barriers to minimise adverse effects.</i>			
2.1.1 Information sharing on NTMs in fisheries that have potential to be trade barrier.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	List of NTMs developed.
<i>Action Programme 2.2 Certification, inspection, accreditation and traceability.</i>			
2.2.1 Strengthen fish quality and safety management systems that support the competitive position of ASEAN fish products in the world markets.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Regional guideline is endorsed by SOM-AMAF. Regional guidelines is endorsed by SOM-AMF Regional Plan of Action endorsed by SOM-AMAF.
2.2.1.1 Develop regional guideline on performing risk analysis for antimicrobial resistance arising from the use of antimicrobial agents in aquaculture.	Singapore		
2.2.1.2 Develop regional guidelines for prudent use of antimicrobials in aquaculture			
2.2.1.3 Develop Regional Plan of Action on AMR in Aquaculture			
2.2.1.4 Conduct Regional Workshop on the implementation of the regional guidelines on the prudent use of antimicrobial and its resistance in aquaculture.	Indonesia	2022	Input to 2.2.1.2
2.2.1.5 Report existing capacities of national reference laboratories to address fish quality and safety management issues and perform risks analyses.	ASWGFI	2021-2025	Existing capacities of national reference laboratories are reported.
2.2.2 Harmonise the accreditation and certification system for Good Aquaculture Practices in AMS, in alignment with international standards, to enable the recognition of ASEAN-wide, equivalent requirements.	ASWGFi, EWG-ASEAN GAqP	2021-2022	Guideline is endorsed by SOM-AMAF
2.2.2.1 Develop guidelines/manual for ASEAN GAqP for Food Fish and ASEAN Shrimp GAP certification and accreditation system.			

2.2.2.2 Develop common training programme and materials on GAqP for trainers.			Common training programme and materials is endorsed by SOM-AMAF
2.2.3 Mutual recognition (MRA) and conformity assessment arrangements, in alignment with international standards and practices, for product and services to facilitate integration into a single market and production base.	ASWGFi, EWG-ASEAN GAqP	2021-2025	Number of AMS who have referenced/ used the template when discussing bilateral arrangements with another AMS for trade in fishery products
2.2.3.1 Promote the implementation of the template on arrangement on the equivalence of fishery products inspection and certification systems.			
2.2.3.2 Establish MRA for endorsed ASEAN aquaculture good practices.	ASWGFi EWG-GAqP	2021-2025	MRA is established.
<i>Action Programme 2.3 Streamline and improve quarantine systems and procedures, and harmonize standards and regulations to facilitate trade.</i>			
2.3.1 Strengthen the quarantine and inspection/ sampling procedure and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) and bio- security measures for aquaculture products to secure food safety.	ASWGFi Thailand	2021-2025	Regional workshop is organised.
2.3.1.1 Organise workshop on sharing information and best practices on fisheries quarantine and inspection procedures.			
2.3.1.2 Develop the ASEAN guidelines on inspection mechanism for aquaculture fish and fisheries products.			Regional guidelines is endorsed by SOM-AMAF.
2.3.1.3 Harmonise aquatic animal quarantine and health certification for exportation and importation in alignment with international standards and practices	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Number of AMS with aquatic animal quarantine and health certification harmonised to international standards and practices
2.3.2 Involve the private sector in identifying priority products for the development of standards on aquaculture commodities and priority fisheries products with high value-add.	ASWGFi, EWG-GAqP FCG/ASSP	2021-2025	Number of capacity building training/ workshops on

2.3.2.1 Organise regional consultation to increase understanding of standards for aquaculture commodities and priority fisheries products.			standards for aquaculture commodities and priority fisheries product
<i>Action Programme 2.4 Enhance regional and international cooperation to ensure that all major ASEAN food market are integrated, and the food trading system is strengthened and utilised to provide stable food supplies.</i>			
2.4.1 Develop regional networking with fisheries cooperatives and fishers organization to support the implementation of ASEAN fisheries standards, guidelines and best practices.	ASWGFi AFCF	2021-2025	Number of private sectors involved in the promotion of ASEAN fisheries standards, guidelines and best practices.

Strategic Thrust 3: Ensure food security, food safety, better nutrition and equitable distribution.

Activities/Sub-activities	ASEAN Bodies Lead Country	Timeline	Output Indicators
<i>Action Programme 3.2 Food Safety and Health.</i>			
3.2.1 Strengthen national policy and accelerate the establishment of food safety and food quality standards, in alignment with international standards and requirements/practices, and mobilise resources for effective ASEAN wide adoption.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Compiled information on national food safety and quality standards of fisheries products.
3.2.1.1 Information exchange on existing national policy on food safety and quality standards of fisheries products.			
3.2.1.2 Develop regional food safety and quality standards on fisheries products aligned with international standards.			Food safety and quality standard on fisheries products developed.
3.2.1.3 Provide input as requested by relevant ASEAN bodies on the development of ASEAN Food Safety Regulatory Framework (AFSRF)			Protocols of AFSRF is endorsed by relevant ASEAN Bodies, including ASWGFi.

Strategic Thrust 4: Increase resilience of fisheries and aquaculture to climate change, natural disasters and other shocks.

Activities/Sub-activities	ASEAN Bodies Lead Country	Timeline	Output Indicators
<i>Action Programme 4.1 Increase investment in R&D for technologies and management systems with a focus on resilience to facilitate climate smart/friendly agriculture, land use, and fishery in cooperation with research programmes and networks on the basis of best practices.</i>			
4.1 Information sharing on climate change impact and adaptation strategies for fisheries and aquaculture, early warning systems/indicators of climate impacts, and climate resilient aquaculture/ fisheries technologies and approaches.	ASWGFi AFCF	2021-2025	Climate change related information on fisheries and aquaculture is compiled.
4.2 Stock take on climate risk and mitigation and adaptation options across ASEAN fisheries and aquaculture sector.	ASWGFi AFCF	2021-2025	Stocktaking report.
4.3 Develop regional guideline on indicators for aquaculture and capture fisheries to facilitate ecosystem-based adaptation to the impact of climate change.	ASWGFi AFCF Philippines & Viet Nam	2021-2025	Regional guideline is endorsed by SOM-AMAF.
4.4 Identify and promote green technologies for adoption, such as low greenhouse gas emission, carbon sequestration from marine waters technology for aquaculture, and Integrated Multi-trophic Aquaculture (IMTA).	ASWGFi AFCF	2021-2025	List of green technologies identified and promoted.
4.5 Establish regional data and information on critical habitats such as mangrove, seagrass and coral reef as well as linkage between relevant institutions in AMS.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Regional information on critical habitats and linkage with institutions in AMS is established.

Strategic Thrust 5: Assist resource constrained small producers and SMEs to improve productivity, technology and product quality, to meet global market standards and increase competitiveness in line with the ASEAN Policy Blueprint on SME Development

Activities/Sub-activities	ASEAN Bodies Lead Country	Timeline	Output Indicators
<i>Action Programme: 5.1. Assist small scale producers and SMEs in the FAF sector to become viable and competitive enterprises by provision of better technology, inputs, finance and extension services, access to higher value markets, and by facilitating integration into modern value chains</i>			
5.1.1. Assist small-scale producers from both capture fishery and aquaculture to meet with standards on safety and quality of fish and fishery products for securing and maintaining access to markets at the national, regional and international level.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Number of training organised.
5.1.1.1 Conduct of training for small-scale producers to understand and familiarize with safety and quality standards of fish and fishery products.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	
<i>Action Programme 5.2 Encourage larger scale enterprises to perform a mentoring role by linking with small-scale producers and SMEs through mechanisms such as contract farming to foster adoption of innovations and participation in high value markets.</i>			
5.2.1 Promote Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in extending technology from large enterprises to small-scale farmers.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Country report on the promotion of PPP activities.
5.2.2. Promote cluster farming for small-scale producers to meet with regional/international standards.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Country report on the promotion of cluster farming.

Strategic Thrust 6: Strengthen ASEAN joint approaches on international and regional issues.

Activities/Sub-activities	ASEAN Bodies Lead Country	Timeline	Output Indicators
<i>Action Programme: 6.1 Enhance coordination and develop joint approaches through consultations among AMS and related ASEAN bodies in regional and international fora in order to gain a better hearing for its views and proposals, and obtain more favourable outcomes in negotiations and agreements affecting FAF sector.</i>			
6.1.1 Collaborate with relevant regional and international partners to build capacity on international trade-related issues (e.g. Marine Mammal Protection Act)	ASWGFi FCG/ASSP AFCF	2021-2025	Training/Workshop is organised.
6.1.2 Develop and present ASEAN common positions on issues affecting the fisheries sector the region in various regional fora (e.g. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, RPOA-IUU, Coral Triangle Initiatives on Coral Reef, Fisheries and Food Security, Codex Alimentarius Commission, and World Trade Organization).	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Common positions are developed and presented in regional fora.
<i>Action Programme 6.2. Engage with regional and international processes to enhance ASEAN cooperation to improve the governance of trans-boundary fishing and traceability of fishery products in order to combat IUU fishing.</i>			
6.2.1 Conduct pilot testing of ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme for Marine Capture Fisheries (ACDS) in selected in AMS.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Pilot testing of ACDS is completed in three AMS.
6.2.2 Assess the implementation of ASEAN Regional Plan of Action to Manage Fishing Capacity.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Assessment report is completed.
6.2.3 Develop the Roadmap on Combating IUU Fishing in the ASEAN Region (2021 – 2025).	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Roadmap is endorsed by SOM-AMAF.
6.2.4 Establish the ASEAN Network for Combating IUU Fishing (AN-IUU)	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Cooperation Framework, Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of AN-IUU endorsed by SOM-AMAF. Focal Points of AN-IUU are appointed by AMS. AN-IUU is operationalized.

6.2.5 Foster dialogue and cooperation between ASEAN Member States, Dialogue Partners, and international and regional organizations in combating IUU fishing.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Dialogue or joint activity is organised.
6.2.6 Build up the capacity of AMS to effectively meet the requirements of international agreements relating to combating IUU fishing (e.g. Port State Measures).	ASWGFi FCG/ASSP	2021-2025	Training/Workshop is organised.
6.2.7 Implement the ASEAN Guidelines for Preventing the Entry of Fish and Fisheries Products from IUU Fishing Activities into the Supply Chain.	ASWGFi	2021-2025	Country report on the implementation of the guideline.