

The 8th Asian Fisheries Forum

The 8th Asian Fisheries Forum (8AFF) was conducted in Le Meridien Resorts & International Convention Centre, Kochi, India from the 20th – 23rd November, 2007 with the AFS-Indian Branch (AFS-IB) as the host and Prof. Mohan Joseph Modayil, Director, Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Kochi as the convener of the forum. The theme for 8AFF is **'Fisheries and Aquaculture: Strategic Outlook for Asia'**

The 8AFF was the largest fisheries gathering in Asia, and received an overwhelming response. More than 1000 scientists from 33 countries participated in the deliberations and a total of 895 abstracts from 33 countries were accepted for presentation. The 8AFF was supported by many co-sponsors:

1. AFS-Indian Branch, India
2. World Fish Center, Penang
3. Government of India, India
4. Indian Council of Agricultural Research, India
5. AARM/AIT, Thailand,
6. Intervet Singapore,
7. Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research, Australia and
8. Aquaculture CRSP.

In addition, the FAO, UN, NACA and the Marine Products Export Development Authority co-sponsored and ran a special session on **"Special Symposium on Shrimp Aquaculture"**. The **First Global Symposium on Gender in Fisheries (GAF)** was successfully held during 8AFF.

To acknowledge the increasing role that aquaculture is playing in Asian fisheries, the 8th Council decided to change the forum's name from the **Asian Fisheries Forum (AFF)** to **Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum (AFAF)** and this was endorsed by the 9th AFS General Assembly held during the 8AFF. To avoid confusion, the acronyms "AFAF" will be used in all future fora of the Society.

The AFS-IB has kindly prepared a comprehensive report on 8AFF which can be accessed .A Summary Report of the full report is given below:

Summary Report:

Prepared by AFS-IB

INAUGURAL FUNCTION

The inaugural function of the 8th AFF was held between 5 pm and 9 pm on 20.11.2007. Dr. S.Ayyappan, Deputy Director General (Fisheries), ICAR, & Chairman, AFS-Indian Branch welcomed the gathering. Presiding over the function, Dr. Chan Lui-Lee, President, AFS highlighted the role of Asian Fisheries Forum in the past as well as in the future for developing fisheries as a source of food and employment. He also called upon the members of the AFS to work jointly to make Asia the source of fish, a source of all nutrients for the whole world. The 8th AFF was inaugurated by Dr.Mangala Rai, Secretary, DARE, Govt. of India & Director General, ICAR. In his inaugural address, he highlighted the need for generating scientific methods for

producing more fish based on modern food safety concepts to address the problems of nutritive food security, employment and export earnings. To achieve these objectives, he called for wholehearted co-operation among all the Asian countries. He also exalted the researchers in the field of fisheries and aquaculture to address problems such as climate change, disease control, sustainability, food safety and quality. Dr. Abdul Aziz, Vice Chancellor, Aligarh Muslim University in his felicitation address told that there is need for more meaningful co-operation between Asian countries in the wake of globalization. In this respect Asian Fisheries Forum and the deliberations in the coming three days have a major role to play in the development of fisheries sector in Asia. Shri. Ajay Bhattacharya, IAS, Joint Secretary (Fisheries), DAHDF, Govt. of India, Shri. G. Mohan Kumar, IAS, Chairman, MPEDA and Dr. K. Devadasan, Director, CIFT addressed the gathering. Dr. Meryl J. Williams, Former Director General, WorldFish Center, Dr. M.V. Gupta, World Food Prize Laureate, Dr. Stephen Hall, Director General, WorldFish Center, Penang and Dr. Sena De Silva, Director General, NACA, Bangkok felicitated the event. Dr. Mohan Joseph Modayil, Director, CMFRI & Convener, 8th AFF 2007 proposed the vote of thanks. The inaugural function was followed by a cultural programme.

SYMPOSIA AND TECHNICAL SESSIONS

The symposia and technical sessions of the 8th AFF were held for three days on November 21, 22 & 23, 2007 on the theme “ Fisheries and Aquaculture: Strategic Outlook for Asia”. Two symposia on “Gender and Fisheries: Solutions through Gender Research” and “Shrimp Aquaculture in Asia: Current Status and Future Prospects” and one special session on “Fish Health” were held. These are in addition to 19 technical sessions on the following areas: Living Aquatic Resources: Capture Fisheries; Living Aquatic Resources: Management; Aquaculture: Production System and Management; Aquaculture: Productivity Enhancement; Fishing Technology; Post-harvest Technology; Harvest and Post-harvest Technology; Food Safety & Quality Assurance; Economics and Marketing; Exports, Trade and Globalization; Valuing Aquatic Biodiversity: Conservation, Use and Human Nutrition; Environment, Pollution, Impacts; Genetics and Molecular Biology; Applied Biotechnology; Biotechnology: Nutrition; Fisheries and Society; Socio-economics and Livelihood; Fisheries Education; Human Resources; and Policy and Governance. The symposia, special session and technical sessions were held in five parallel sessions.

In addition to the oral presentations, poster presentations on the following 11 areas were held on November 21 & 22, 2007: Capture Fisheries and Management; Aquatic Biodiversity; Post-harvest Technology and value Addition; Food Safety and Quality Assurance; Genetics and Molecular Biology; Applied Biotechnology; Aquaculture; Fish Health; Fish Nutrition; Environment, Pollution and Impacts; and Fisheries and Society.

In all, 606 presentations were made, which included 398 oral and 208 poster presentations.

Special Symposium I

Gender and Fisheries: Solutions through Gender Research

The 2nd Global Symposium on Gender and Fisheries, organized during the 8th Asian Fisheries Forum, 20 -23 November 2007 at Kochi, India, sought ‘solutions through research’ by looking at fisheries and aquaculture through the gender lens, which gives a better, more complete picture – one that is better focused and provides the basis for understanding fisheries issues and taking more appropriate action.

The meet was chaired by Dr. Meryl Williams, Former Director General, WorldFish Center, Penang and Chairperson, Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research; and co-chaired by Dr. M.C. Nandeesha, Dean Fisheries College, Tripura. Some of the highlights of the Symposium were summarized by Dr Meryl Williams.

Special Symposium II

Shrimp Aquaculture in Asia: Current Status and Future Prospects

The special symposium was chaired by Prof. Sena De Silva, Director General, Network of Aquaculture Centers in Asia-Pacific, Bangkok; and co-chaired by Shri G. Mohan Kumar, IAS, Chairman, MPEDA and Dr. Rohana Subasinghe, FAO, Rome. Twelve invited papers were presented in this symposium.

Special Session: Fish Health

This session was chaired by Dr. Brian Sheehan, Intervet Singapore, and co-chaired by Dr. C.V. Mohan, NACA. Dr. Rajendran, Central Institute of Fisheries Education, Mumbai and Dr. K. Riji John, Fisheries College, Tuticorin were the rapporteurs. There were 25 presentations by various researchers from six countries in the session on diverse aspects of fish health.

Technical Session: Living Aquatic Resources: Management

The session was chaired by Dr. D. Staples, Consultant, FAO and co-chaired by Dr. P.S.B.R. James, Former Director, CMFRI. Dr. Utpal Bhowmick, CIFRI and Dr. Prathiba Rohit, CMFRI were the rapporteurs. In this session 24 papers were presented.

Technical Session: Aquaculture Production and Management

The Session was chaired by Dr. M.V. Gupta, Former Assistant Director General, WorldFish Center, Penang and co-chaired by Dr. A. G. Ponniah, Director, Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture, Chennai and Dr. Fathima Yusoff, University Malaysia Putra, Malaysia. Dr. S. Adhikari, Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture, Bhubaneswar and Dr. S. Felix, Fisheries College, Tuticorin were the rapporteurs. In this Session, 35 papers were presented.

Technical Session: Aquaculture: Productivity Enhancement

The session was chaired by Dr. Michael Rimmer, James Cook University and co-chaired by Dr. Chan L. Lee

Technical Session: Harvest and Post Harvest Technology, Value Addition: Fishing Technology

The session was chaired by Dr. V.S. Somavanshi, Director General, Fishery Survey of India, Mumbai and co-chaired by Shri J.V.H. Dixitulu, Editor, Fishing chimes. Dr. Leela Edwin and Dr. P. Pravin, CIFT were the rapporteurs. Eight papers were presented in this session.

Technical Session: Harvest and Post Harvest Technology, Value Addition: Post Harvest Technology and Value Addition

The session was chaired by Dr. K. Devadasan, Director, CIFT and co-chaired by Dr. S. Ayyappan, DDG (Fisheries), ICAR and Dr. C.S. Purushothaman, CIFE, Mumbai. Dr. D. Venkateswarulu and Dr. S. Basu, CIFE were the rapporteurs. In this session 12 papers were presented.

Technical Session: Harvest and Post Harvest Technology, Value Addition: Food Safety and Quality Assurance

The session was chaired by Prof. Mohammed Shariff, University of Putra Malaysia, Selangor and co-chaired by Mr. Vishnu Bhat, Director, MPEDA. Dr. T.V.Sankar and Dr. P.K.Vijayan, CIFT were the rapporteurs. Eleven papers were presented in this session.

Technical Session: Exports, Trade and Globalization

The session was chaired by Mr. Kuruvilla Thomas, Director, MPEDA and co-chaired by Dr.K.R.Prasad, Fisheries entrepreneur, Visakhapatnam. Dr.R.S.Biradar, CIFE and Dr.G.R.Unnithan, CIFT were the rapporteurs. Seven papers were presented in this session.

Technical Session: Valuing Aquatic Biodiversity: Conservation, Use and Human Nutrition

The Session was chaired by Dr. Matthias Halwart, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO and co-chaired by Dr. Shakuntala Thilsted, Department of Human Nutrition, University of Copenhagen. Dr R. Soundararajan, NBFGR, Lucknow, Dr K. Vijayakumaran, CMFRI and Dr. K. Dinesh, Fisheries College, Kerala Agricultural University were the rapporteurs. The Session was conducted for two days. A total of 37 papers were presented over the two days.

Technical Session: Environment, Pollution, Impacts

The session was chaired by Dr. Christopher G. Barlow, Mekong River Commission, Vientiane, Lao PDR, and co-chaired by Dr.Yang Yi, Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand and Dr. K.K. Vass, Director, CIFRI, Barrackpore. Dr. P.K.Krishnakumar, CMFRI and Dr. S.N.Singh, CIFRI were the rapporteurs. In the session 23 papers were presented.

Technical Session: Biotechnology: Genetics and Molecular Biology

The session was chaired by Dr. George John, Advisor, Department of Biotechnology, Govt. of India and co-chaired by Dr.W.S. Lakra, Director, National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources, Lucknow. Dr. S.D.Singh, CIFE, Mumbai and Dr.P.Jayasankar, CMFRI were the rapporteurs. In this session 16 papers were presented.

Technical Session: Biotechnology: Applied Biotechnology

The session was chaired by Dr. Martin Kumar, South Australian Research and Development Institute and co-chaired by Dr. N. Sarangi, Director, Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture. Dr. Kajal Chakraborty, CMFRI and Dr Devika Pillai, Fisheries College, Kerala Agricultural University were the rapporteurs. In this session, 15 papers were presented.

Technical Session: Biotechnology: Nutrition

The session was chaired by Dr. Shian Shiyen, Taiwan National University and co-chaired by Dr.K.V.Devaraj, Former Vice-Chancellor, Karnataka Agricultural University. Dr. Mukhtar Khan, Aligarh Muslim University was the rapporteur. In this session 27 papers were presented.

Technical Session: Fisheries and Society

The session was chaired by Prof.P.Sorgeloos, Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium and co-chaired by Dr.S.P.Tripathi, Former Director, CIFE and Dr.V.V.Sugunan, Assistant Director General, ICAR. Dr.R.Narayanakumar, CMFRI and Dr.Femeena Hassan, CIFT were the rapporteurs.

Technical Session: Socio-Economics and Livelihoods

The session was chaired by Dr. Ida M. Siason, University of Phillipines, Iloilo and co-chaired by Dr. Kurokura, Tokyo University of Fisheries. Dr. Pradeep Katiha, CIFRI and Dr. Mahalakshmi, CIBA were the rapporteurs. In this session, 10 papers were presented.

Technical Session: Fisheries Education

The session was chaired by Dr. Yingqi Zhou, Shanghai Fisheries University and co-chaired by Prof. Roshada Hashim, University Sains Malaysia, Penang and Dr. S.C. Mukherji, CIFE, Mumbai. Dr. V.P. Vipin Kumar was the rapporteur.

Technical Session: Human Resources

The session was chaired by Dr. Barney Smith, Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research, Australia and co-chaired by Dr. Dilip Kumar, Director, CIFE, Mumbai. Dr. Archana Sinha, CIFE was the rapporteur.

Technical Session: Policy and Governance

The session was chaired by Dr. Stephen Hall, Director General, WorldFish Center, Penang. Dr. G. Mohanraj, CMFRI was the rapporteur. Nine papers were presented in this session.

VALEDICTORY FUNCTION

The Valedictory Function of the 8th AFF was held on November 23, 2007 at 5 p.m. Dr. S. Ayyappan, DDG (Fisheries), ICAR & Chairman, Asian Fisheries Society Indian Branch welcomed the gathering and presented the draft Recommendation of the 8th AFF. Dr. Stephen Hall, Director General, WorldFish Center, Penang, Dr. Sena De Silva, Director General, NACA, Bangkok, Dr. Meryl J. Williams, Former Director General, WorldFish Center, Penang, Dr. S.N. Dwivedi, Former Director General, Madhya Pradesh Council for Science & Technology, Dr. Brian Sheehan, Intervet Norbio Singapore shared their views about the 8th AFF. Dr. Meryl Williams announced awards to the following papers presented in the Symposium on Gender and Fisheries. Dr. Chan-Lui Lee, Asian Fisheries Society introduced the newly elected President and Councilors of the 9th Council of AFS. Dr. Yang Yi, Shanghai Fisheries University, China has been elected as the President of the 9th Council of AFS. Dr. Lee informed that the next Forum will be held in Shanghai in 2010. Following this, a brief presentation on the proposed 9th Asian Fisheries & Aquaculture Forum was made.

The 8th AFF concluded after vote of thanks by Prof. Mohan Joseph Modayil, Convener of the 8th AFF.

**8th ASIAN FISHERIES FORUM
DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Considering the depletion of several fish stocks in the Asia-Pacific region, responsible fisheries management and co-management practices need to be implemented for sustainable fisheries. Optimum fleet size and capacity assessment based on fish stock estimates need to be quantified for different regions.
2. Taking into account the inadequacies of single species management programmes, the thrust on fisheries management has to shift towards ecosystem-based approach.

3. In the context of increasing concerns on the impact of climate change on fisheries, vulnerability and adaptive capacity of fish and fishing communities have to be assessed to develop mitigation measures.
4. Researches on straddling and migratory fish stocks need to be taken up on a regional basis for optimum utilization of the resources.
5. In view of the increasing environmental degradation of the water bodies including major river systems in the Asia- Pacific region, the experience of Mekong River Commission may be emulated for improving the health of the ecosystems and fisheries in these waters.
6. Considering the growing concern on the decline of biodiversity in the aquatic ecosystems, programmes on conservation and restoration of endangered species and habitats should be strengthened with regional co-operation. New tools of molecular taxonomy and DNA bar-coding need to be employed for this purpose.
7. In view of increasing costs of fishing and to reduce greenhouse gas emission by fishing boats, greater research efforts are recommended at developing innovative, fuel-efficient fishing methods.
8. Loss reduction at both harvest and post-harvest stages that are significant need to be reduced through suitable interventions of juvenile escape devices and techniques of waste recycling and value addition.
9. Globalization, location-specific transition in fisheries and prevalence of HIV/AIDS among fishing communities make a strong case for the need to look at fisheries through gender lens.
10. Taking into account the disease and other problems in shrimp farms, there is an immediate need for species diversification in aquaculture with consideration to environmental sustainability and market potential.
11. In view of the increasing cost and competition for feed ingredients, it is recommended that cost-effective feeds and improved feeding strategies are developed for enhancing production efficiency of aquaculture systems.
12. Increasing incidences and cross border transmittance of diseases and weak quarantine in the region call for development of novel and new generation cost-effective diagnostic tools and certification mechanisms.
13. Considering the low value realized for fish and fishery products, a value chain approach from production-to-consumption system with food safety needs to be adopted for better returns to the stakeholders.
14. In view of the emerging issues related to trade barriers and globalization, establishing stronger partnerships among the countries in the region has become a necessity for harnessing mutual strengths for collective benefits.

A salient feature of the 8th AFF was the preparation of a draft Resolution, which was circulated to all the delegates who attended the Forum. The draft Kochi Resolution 2007 is given below:

KOCHI RESOLUTION, 2007

Preamble

Asian countries derive substantial economic, social and nutritional benefits from fisheries, with significance for rural development and poverty alleviation. However, several issues such as coastal overfishing, depletion of fish stocks, impact of climate change on biodiversity and abundance, disease in aquaculture and trade-related issues have emerged in recent years. These call for an integrated action and strategy at the regional level.

The Resolution

The 8th Asian Fisheries Forum hereby resolves to request the National Governments to form a strategic alliance of fish producing Asia-Pacific countries that are net exporters in global market with the objectives of enhancing fish production in a sustainable manner, promote quality of produce, improve the livelihood of fishers and other stakeholders and encourage regional cooperation.

The Alliance will strive for:

- value chain approach from production to consumption system;
- evolving standards based on scientific facts for fish and fishery products by participation in meetings of Codex Alimentarius Commission, International Standards Organizations, etc.;
- identifying uniform quality criteria for all aquaculture inputs with emphasis on food safety, viz., without contaminants, hormones and antibiotics;
- evolving a mechanism for ecolabeling and certification;
- jointly addressing trade-related issues;
- sharing the straddling and migratory fish stocks for optimum utilization;
- conserving and managing endangered species; and
- strengthening capacity building by exchange of expertise and data among the countries in mutually agreed areas of research and development.

It is also resolved that a **Steering Committee** shall be formed to mobilize the National Governments in Asia-Pacific countries for formation and organization of Asia-Pacific Regional Alliance for Fisheries (APRAF).