REPORT OF THE TWELFTH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FISHERIES ECONOMICS AND TRADE (IIFET 2004 JAPAN)
“WHAT ARE RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES?”
26-29 July 2004
Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (TUMSAT), Tokyo, Japan

By Rapporteur Suriyan Vichitlekarn, SEAFDEC

Caveat and explanatory note: Normally, reports generated by Mr. Vichitlekarn are reviewed and approved or edited by the speakers and session organizers within a short time after a conference. In this case, for a variety of reasons, the normal process could not be followed; some sections were reviewed and some were not. What follows is therefore a general indication of the events which occurred and the ideas presented, and should not be taken as a verbatim report.

I. Introduction

1. The Twelfth Biennial Conference of the International Institute of Fisheries Economics and Trade (IIFET 2004 JAPAN) was organized by Japan International Fisheries Research Society (JIFRS) from 26 to 29 July 2004 at the Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (TUMSAT), Tokyo, Japan.

2. The conference was organized under the general theme “What are Responsible Fisheries?” with the objective of exchanging views and experiences on all aspects of fisheries and aquaculture economics to clarify directions and approaches for effective implementation of responsible fisheries.

3. The Conference was attended by academic economists, fisheries managers, fisheries researchers and representatives of national and international organization. The list of participants appears under Contact Lists in this Proceedings. Additional data on participation by country, region, and topic, is found in the Executive Summary, under Introductions.

II. Opening Session

4. Professor Harry Campbell of the University of Queensland, Australia, President of International Institute of Fisheries Economics and Trade (IIFET) welcomed all participants to the conference. It has long been a wish to hold an IIFET conference in Japan, which is considered one of the world’s most important seafood importers. On behalf of IIFET, he expressed appreciation to JIFRS, particularly to Prof. Dr. Yoshiaki Matsuda, for hosting this conference. He outlined the mandate of IIFET to encourage academics to interact with government and private industry economists, to improve our ability to contribute to the resolution of fisheries problems, and and to support the sustainable development of responsible fisheries.
5. Professor Richard S. Johnston of Oregon State University, USA and founder of IIFET gave a brief historical review of IIFET and its activities. He cited the lack of communication and intellectual interaction among academics, researchers and government officers to exchange views on important fisheries issues. In the late 1970’s, a need was expressed for an informal network to promote dialogue among various countries, and across professional boundaries. The first conference was held in Anchorage, Alaska, USA in 1982. Since then, a total of eleven biennial conferences have been held in various countries including New Zealand, Canada, Denmark, Chile, France, Taiwan, Morocco, and Norway, with Japan the site of the twelfth conference. He expressed appreciation for the interest and enthusiasm of all participating in this conference, which would form an important basis for developing successful outcomes.

6. Prof. Rikuo Takai, President of Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (TUMSAT) briefly introduced the University. He cited the recent merging of Tokyo University of Fisheries and Tokyo University of Mercantile Marine, which formed TUMSAT in October 2003. On behalf of TUMSAT, he expressed his honor to be able to co-host this very interesting and important conference. He expressed high esteem for the strong will and enthusiasm of Professor Dr. Tadashi Yamamoto, Honorary President of JIFRS who has been providing untiring advice and support in hosting this conference in Japan. He stressed the need for concerted efforts to tackle a number of fisheries issues. Along this line, the issue of “Responsible Fisheries” was chosen as the overall theme of the conference. He stressed the vision of TUMSAT that contributing to this development would promote harmony between fisheries and the natural environment in which they take place. He wished all the participants the pleasant stay in Japan and a successful outcome of the Conference.

7. Professor Yoshiaki Matsuda, President of JIFRS and Chairman of the Steering Committee of the Conference welcomed all participants to the Conference. He raised the need for sustainable utilization of fisheries resources in response to the world’s growing population. This has called for the need to address the issue of responsible fisheries. He expressed appreciation for contributions and support from various individuals and organizations including the Conference Secretariat staff members who made this Conference possible.

8. Professor Matsuda also took the opportunity to announce and congratulate the winners of the Best Student Paper Award and the Yamamoto Awards as follows:

- **Best Student Paper Award**
  “Simulating the Effects of Marine Reserves as an Additional Management Tool to Paua Harvest around Stewart Islands: An Economic Analysis” by **Viktoria Schneider**, University of Otago, New Zealand

- **The Yamamoto Awards**
  - “Marine Fisheries in Vietnam” by **Nguyen Thi Kim Anh**, University of Fisheries, Vietnam
  - “Decentralized Management: The New Approach of Thai Coastal Fishery Management” by **Kungwan Juntarashote**, Kasetsart University, Thailand
“Community Based Fisheries management (CBFM) as the Future Fisheries Management Option for Small-Scale Fisheries of Bangladesh” by Md. Monir Hossain, Md. Aminul Islam, Stephen Ridgway, and Takashi Matsuishi, Hokkaido University, Japan


9. The conference program (please refer to Final Conference Program in these proceedings) began. The opening session participants noted with appreciation the contributions of IIFET’s President, Executive Director and Executive Committee as well as the conference organizing committee and secretariat staff members (a list of whom appears under Contact Lists.)

III. Keynote Speech on “The State of World Fisheries and Future Sustainable Issues”

10. Mr. Ichiro Nomura, Assistant Director-General, Fisheries Department, FAO made a keynote speech on the topic (see Keynotes for the text and powerpoint presentation.) He outlined major areas of concern in the state of world fisheries including the declining trends of world fisheries resources, the need for improved information for capture fisheries, implementation of international fishery instruments particularly in relation to the issues of overcapacity and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU), international fisheries governance and food security. This has called for management measures including lower levels of fishing effort for wild resources, supplementary measures for recovery of marine fisheries, reduction of fisheries subsidies contributing to overcapacity that cause IUU fishing, and so on.

11. Mr. Nomura raised a concern about the global and regional supply and demand of fish and fishery products. It was noted that while production of capture fisheries has reached its peak, production from aquaculture has shown an increasing trend to offset the declining production of capture fisheries. He also pointed out the per capita consumption of fish as an indication of the important contribution of fisheries to world development and food security.

12. Regarding trade of fish and fishery products, Mr. Nomura outlined issues of quality and safety management including chemical residue in fish and fishery products, sustainability of aquaculture including feeds, bilateral trade arrangements, IUU, and overcapacity as priority areas that need attention from all.

13. Along this line, Mr. Nomura pointed out the need to implement international instruments as a means to achieving sustainable development of fisheries. This effort was exemplified by the conclusion of the 1992 United Nation Convention on Environment and Development (UNCED) on sustainable development of fisheries supported by 1995 Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF) and subsequent supplementary International Plans of Action (IPOAs) and Strategies. Another important instrument was the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD-POI), which is considered an umbrella supporting the CCRF and IPOAs particularly combatting IUU, biodiversity, stakeholder participation, and
implementation of the precautionary and eco-system approaches. The WSSD-POI called for concerted efforts and target timeline for achieving the implementation of the global instruments related to fisheries.

14. Mr. Nomura emphasized the roles of RFBs and their contributions in the implementation of the post-UNCED instruments including rebuilding depleted stocks, preventing further decline, and combatting IUU fishing. This includes effective decision-making and effectiveness of fisheries governance and management. However, this can be achieved by strong will and utmost efforts of their members in pursuing this need. He reiterated the importance of food security and livelihoods as well as an enabling environment for sustainable aquaculture in many developing countries. This was supported by the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security at the national level. In conclusion, fisheries will be vitally important for global society. There is a need to address the issue of sustainability, and an improved resource base and eco-system through the implementation of the global instruments related to fisheries in order to improve state of world fisheries and the livelihoods of those depend on them.

15. In the plenary discussion, there was clarification made regarding the attention paid to fisheries in developing countries. Mr. Nomura cited the FAO’s policy of assisting development of fisheries in developing countries. However, in achieving sustainable fisheries, this does not necessarily mean increasing fisheries production but enabling effective fisheries management. This principle should be applied across all countries.

16. With regard to the role of the FAO in dealing with non-FAO members, it was explained that while several good initiatives by a number of non-FAO members such as the Russian Federation have been noted, the FAO has a limited role in carrying them out.

17. With the view to combatting IUU fishing, there was concern raised regarding the need of national governments and RFMOs for reliable data. The absence of reliable data has led to a lack of tools to define the extent and impacts of IUU on fisheries. Suggestions were also made about concerted efforts by consumers and fish traders to be more concerned about the well-being of fisheries resources and impacts of unsustainability.

18. In promoting effective implementation of international instruments, Mr. Nomura informed the conference that FAO plays a facilitating role, which depends on regional contexts and existing fisheries management frameworks. He cited the major thrust of the implementation of international instruments including IPOAs is the development of NPOAs, which rely on the seriousness of the efforts of national governments. Some difficulties due to lack of human resources and the financial capability to implement these programs were noted. Along this line, FAO provides technical support for such development. In addition, RFMOs could play an important role to put these effective management measures in place.

19. In response to the issue of government subsidies in the fisheries sector, Mr. Nomura stated that WTO still remains the global body responsible for setting principles and negotiation rules. There has been effort by FAO and UNEP towards defining subsidies, measuring impacts of subsidies on fisheries and identifying ways forward in the use of subsidies. Close linkages between subsidies and overcapacity and IUU fishing was noted and needs further investigation.
IV. Special Sessions of the Conference

Please refer to “Special Session Summaries” under the Reports section of these proceedings.

V. Regular Paper Presentation and Poster Sessions

20. In parallel to the Special Sessions, regular paper presentation and poster sessions on a number of topics related to fishery economics and the implementation of responsible fisheries. A list of the presentations made in the regular and poster sessions appears in the Final Conference Program in these proceedings; the main conference themes are found as headings in the Submitted Papers by Theme section of these proceedings.

VI. Symposium on “What are Responsible Fisheries?”

Please refer to “Symposium on Responsible Fisheries Summary” under Reports in these proceedings.

VII. Closing of the Conference

21. Dr. Mahfuzuddin Ahmed, the newly elected President of IIFET, expressed deep appreciation to Professor Dr. Tadashi Yamamoto, Professor Dr. Yoshiaki Matsuda and the Japanese staff for hosting this conference and the hospitality extended to all participants. He noted the wide variety of participants from various part of the world which set the benchmark at this conference, as an important step in better addressing fisheries economics and trade issues. He extended his thanks to the former President, Executive Director and all members of the Executive Committee for their contribution and efforts extended to the IIFET members for the past two years. He looked forward to seeing everyone in Portsmouth, England for IIFET 2006.

22. Professor Dr. Tadashi Yamamoto, Honorary President of JIRFS viewed this conference as a special event to bring in ideas and views from various backgrounds and experiences. He thanked everyone for joining the conference.

23. Dr. Jon Sutinen informed the participants of the planned conference on fishery economics of the North American Association of Fisheries Economists (NAAFE) to be held from 25 to 27 May 2005 in Vancouver, Canada, to be hosted by the University of British Columbia. He extended an invitation to all to participate in that conference.