

60-Day Public Comment Period Opens for the Fisheries Improvement Project Protocol for the ASEAN Region

JAKARTA, Indonesia, September 15, 2014 – A draft of the Fisheries Improvement Project (FIP) Protocol for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region is available for public comment through November 15, 2014. The (i) *Public Comment Feedback Form* and (ii) the *Fishery Improvement Project Protocol for ASEAN* can be downloaded at the following link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/aoa40pmtj9lt67d/AACA6XhG17SYDLZyiJ6H1eUOa?dl=0>

Please send all comments to fip.steeringcommittee@gmail.com no later than November 15, 2014.

A steering committee of 25 industry and non-government stakeholders designed the draft protocol as a first step for the fishing industry in the ASEAN region to improve its environmental, social and sustainability performance. The protocol aims to align with internationally recognized fishery standards and national fishery management plans, and meet the growing demand by global buyers to purchase seafood from suppliers that can certify that their products are sourced from better managed, sustainable and responsible fisheries.

Fish and fishery products provide livelihood and income for millions of people in Asia – and are crucial contributions to the region’s food supply and economic output. However, current fishing levels are not sustainable and continue to damage the region’s oceans. Good fisheries management is needed to prevent further decline and rebuild marine ecosystems in the region. Without the use of sustainable practices, the depletion of fish will lead to serious negative consequences for both the environment and the future economic output of the countries in Southeast Asia.

With the formation of an ASEAN Economic Community in 2015, the region will become one of the 10 largest global economies and a major player in the global seafood industry. The creation of a single market will present an opportunity for the industry and other interested stakeholders to work collaboratively across ASEAN to improve sustainability of fisheries and promote responsible fishing in a way that continues to support food security and safeguards the livelihoods of small-scale fisher folk in the region.

This public comment process is open to all individuals, organizations interested in providing inputs and feedback on the draft protocol, in line with international guidelines for creating environmental and social standards defined by the ISEAL Alliance. The steering committee will use this feedback to revise the draft protocol that will be piloted with fisheries in several ASEAN countries. The steering committee plans to finalize the Fishery Improvement Project Protocol for ASEAN in the first half of 2015.

Steering Committee: Charoen Pokphand Foods (Thailand); Chicken of the Sea Frozen Foods (USA); Conservation International (Philippines); FairAgora (Thailand); Fisheries Administration of Cambodia (Cambodia); Fish Matter Pte. Ltd. (Australia); Frabelle Fishing Corp. (Philippines); Indonesia Fisheries Federation (Indonesia); Indonesian Fishery Product Processing & Marketing Association (Indonesia); Indonesia Tuna Commission (Indonesia); International Collaborating Center for Aquaculture & Fisheries Sustainability (Vietnam); IRMA Fishing and Trading (Philippines); MDPI Foundation (Indonesia); Mega Sardines (Philippines); Morrisons (UK); NFI Crab Council (USA); Philippine Association of Crab Processors Inc. (Philippines); Phil-Union Frozen Foods Inc. (Philippines); Socskargen Federation of Fishing & Allied Industries (Philippines); Tambuyong Development Center (Philippines); Thai Union Frozen Products (Thailand); Thai Overseas Fisheries Association (Thailand); Vietnam Association of Seafood Exporters & Producers (Vietnam); Vietnam Tuna Association (Vietnam); World Wildlife Fund (Global).

The development of the Fisheries Improvement Project Protocol for the ASEAN region is being carried out with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.