Pre-Multi-Stakeholder Information and Communication (MuSIC) Workshop Yangon, 8 February 2019

Figure 1 From left to right: Mark Dubois (WorldFish); Mr. Hein Ko Soe (journalist at Frontier Magazine Myanmar); U San Myint (leader of the Hlaing Tar Mezali Leased Fishery); Daw Ma Cho (Fishing Committee member and Fish ‘collector’ - intermediary); Dr. Khin Mar Cho (Cornell University Professor and TV-Radio presenter of nutrition in Myanmar); Daw Kyi Kyi Htay (Hlaing Tar Mezali Leased Fishery); Dr. Zi Za Wah (Department of Fisheries, Yangon); Dr. Khin Maung So (WorldFish) and U Myint Aung Maluto (Hlaing Tar Mezali Leased Fishery).

Agenda

1. 10:30am Welcome and round of introductions;
2. 10:40am Objectives of this workshop (8 Feb) and the Multi-Stakeholder Information and Communication (MuSIC) workshop in Penang (18-23 Feb); Michael J. Akester, WorldFish;
3. 11:00am An introduction to WorldFish activities in general and specifically small-scale capture fisheries in Myanmar; Questions and Answer session (Q&A)
4. 11:30am Brief description of fisheries work by each participating group/person (fisherfolk, Pyoe Pin Institute, DoF, Khin and Hein Ko Soe); (Q&A)
5. 12:15pm Lunch
6. 1:15pm An introduction to the FAO Small-Scale Fisheries Guidelines; (Q&A)
7. 1:45pm Revisit the MuSIC workshop objective Q&A
8. 2:30pm Close.

Opening comments

The meeting was attended by 10 people including 4 fishers from the Hlaing Tar Mezali Leased Fishery near Maubin (Fig 1). Kyaw Kyaw from the Pyoe Pin Institute was unable to attend as he had urgent business in Naypyitaw. Reference material, SSF Guidelines in Burmese, was printed in colour and distributed to participants. PowerPoint presentations and reference to human rights and Ecosystem Based Management principles were given to illustrate key points (Annex 1 and separate pdf files).

Fishing community Hlaing Tar Mezali
U San Myint from the Hlaing Tar Mezali Leased Fishery fisherfolk stated that the leaseholder fisher community had noticed an increase in fish abundance during the last few months as irrigation flood control and drainage sluice gates in the area have not been maintained and are stuck open. In addition, the community under Community Based Fisheries Management (CBFM) operations have established fish ‘no-take’ refuge areas. He also noted that large aquaculture ponds in their leased fishery area are interrupting the flow (lateral connectivity) from floodplain to river systems and vice versa. Community Fishing Group (CFG) Tender areas usually suffer a reduction in fish abundance, because water sluice gates are closed in April, hence Fish cannot reach floodplain breeding areas in the leased area. If water sluice gates remain open for 3 months (May to July), fish production will increase in the leased area. In East Maubin in theory, there are 146 leasable fisheries. However, this has been reduced to 57 Leases because of rice field and aquaculture pond encroachment (Fig2). U San Myint added that the government needs to check up of the leasable fisheries on the ground. If the government would like promote the sustainable use of fisheries resources, the Irrigation Department needs to open sluice gates at the start of the monsoon season (May to July). The DoF also needs to adjust downwards the prices for some of the leases.

Mr. Hein Ko Soe, journalist at Frontier Magazine Myanmar

Mr. Hein explained that he is an investigative journalist and had recently published articles here and Myanmar Water Portal here In Frontier he also wrote U Ba Hein, who started a community fisheries group and highlighted aspects of fishers’ life and their difficulties. Now, State and regional governments have

Dr. Zi Za Wah (Department of Fisheries, Yangon)

Zi Za Wah explained her role in the capture fisheries sector associated with the ACIAR funded research projects MYFish I & II together with work on the FRV Nansen during the fish stock assessment work of 2018.

Dr. Khin Mar Cho.

Dr. Khin Mar Cho is a nutrition specialist teaching at Cornell University USA while sharing information about nutrition via a TV programme in Myanmar, magazines and radio.

Annex 1

SSF PowerPoint (separate pdf):

Human rights relevant to SSF and EMB principles: below

WorldFish activities (separate pdf):

Gender aspects in the SSF Guidelines (separate pdf):

**Human Rights and Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM) Principles linked to the SSF-Guidelines**

1. **We are all free and equal.** We are all born free. We all have our own thoughts and ideas. We should all be treated in the same way.
2. **Don’t discriminate.** These rights belong to everybody, whatever our differences.
3. **The right to life.** We all have the right to life, and to live in freedom and safety.
4. **No slavery – past and present.** Nobody has any right to make us a slave. We cannot make anyone our slave.
5. **No Torture.** Nobody has any right to hurt us or to torture us.
6. **We all have the same right to use the law.** I am a person just like you!
7. **We are all protected by the law.** The law is the same for everyone. It must treat us all fairly.
8. **Fair treatment by fair courts.** We can all ask for the law to help us when we are not treated fairly.
9. **No unfair detainment.** Nobody has the right to put us in prison without a good reason and keep us there, or to send us away from our country.
10. **The right to trial.** If we are put on trial this should be in public. The people who try us should not let anyone tell them what to do.
11. **Innocent until proven guilty.** Nobody should be blamed for doing something until it is proven. When people say we did a bad thing we have the right to show it is not true.
12. **The right to privacy.** Nobody should try to harm our good name. Nobody has the right to come into our home, open our letters or bother us or our family without a good reason.
13. **Freedom to move.** We all have the right to go where we want in our own country and to travel as we wish.
14. **The right to asylum.** If we are frightened of being badly treated in our own country, we all have the right to run away to another country to be safe.
15. **The right to a nationality.** We all have the right to belong to a country.
16. **Marriage and family.** Every grown-up has the right to marry and have a family if they want to. Men and women have the same rights when they are married, and when they are separated.
17. **Your own things.** Everyone has the right to own things or share them. Nobody should take our things from us without a good reason.
18. **Freedom of thought.** We all have the right to believe in what we want to believe, to have a religion, or to change it if we want.

19. **Free to say what you want.** We all have the right to make up our own minds, to think what we like, to say what we think, and to share our ideas with other people.

20. **Meet where you like.** We all have the right to meet our friends and to work together in peace to defend our rights. Nobody can make us join a group if we don’t want to.

21. **The right to democracy.** We all have the right to take part in the government of our country. Every grown-up should be allowed to choose their own leaders.

22. **The right to social security.** We all have the right to affordable housing, medicine, education, and child care, enough money to live on and medical help if we are ill or old.

23. **Workers’ rights.** Every grown-up has the right to do a job, to a fair wage for their work, and to join a trade union.

24. **The right to play.** We all have the right to rest from work and to relax.

25. **A bed and some food.** We all have the right to a good life. Mothers and children, people who are old, unemployed or disabled, and all people have the right to be cared for.

26. **The right to education.** Education is a right. Primary school should be free. We should learn about the United Nations and how to get on with others. Our parents can choose what we learn.

27. **Culture and copyright.** Copyright is a special law that protects one’s own artistic creations and writings; others cannot make copies without permission. We all have the right to our own way of life and to enjoy the good things that “art,” science and learning bring.

28. **A free and fair world.** There must be proper order so we can all enjoy rights and freedoms in our own country and all over the world.

29. **Our responsibilities.** We have a duty to other people, and we should protect their rights and freedoms.

30. **Nobody can take away these rights and freedoms from us.**

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**Ecosystem Based-Management Principles**

The following 12 principles are complementary and interlinked.

**Principle 1:** The objectives of management of land, water and living resources are a matter of societal choices.

Different sectors of society view ecosystems in terms of their own economic, cultural and society needs. Indigenous peoples and other local communities living on the land are important stakeholders and their rights and interests should be recognized. Both cultural and biological diversity are central components of the ecosystem approach, and management should take this into account. Societal choices should be expressed as clearly as possible. Ecosystems should be managed for their intrinsic values and for the tangible or intangible benefits for humans, in a fair and equitable way.

**Principle 2:** Management should be decentralized to the lowest appropriate level.

Decentralized systems may lead to greater efficiency, effectiveness and equity. Management should involve all stakeholders and balance local interests with the wider public interest. The closer management is to the ecosystem, the greater the responsibility, ownership, accountability, participation, and use of local knowledge.

**Principle 3:** Ecosystem managers should consider the effects (actual or potential) of their activities on adjacent and other ecosystems.
Management interventions in ecosystems often have unknown or unpredictable effects on other ecosystems; therefore, possible impacts need careful consideration and analysis. This may require new arrangements or ways of organization for institutions involved in decision-making to make, if necessary, appropriate compromises.

**Principle 4: Recognizing potential gains from management, there is usually a need to understand and manage the ecosystem in an economic context. Any such ecosystem-management programme should:**

a. Reduce those market distortions that adversely affect biological diversity;
b. Align incentives to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable use;
c. Internalize costs and benefits in the given ecosystem to the extent feasible.

The greatest threat to biological diversity lies in its replacement by alternative systems of land use. This often arises through market distortions, which undervalue natural systems and populations and provide perverse incentives and subsidies to favor the conversion of land to less diverse systems.

Often those who benefit from conservation do not pay the costs associated with conservation and, similarly, those who generate environmental costs (e.g. pollution) escape responsibility. Alignment of incentives allows those who control the resource to benefit and ensures that those who generate environmental costs will pay.

**Principle 5: Conservation of ecosystem structure and functioning, in order to maintain ecosystem services, should be a priority target of the ecosystem approach.**

Ecosystem functioning and resilience depends on a dynamic relationship within species, among species and between species and their abiotic environment, as well as the physical and chemical interactions within the environment. The conservation and, where appropriate, restoration of these interactions and processes is of greater significance for the long-term maintenance of biological diversity than simply protection of species.

**Principle 6: Ecosystem must be managed within the limits of their functioning.**

In considering the likelihood or ease of attaining the management objectives, attention should be given to the environmental conditions that limit natural productivity, ecosystem structure, functioning and diversity. The limits to ecosystem functioning may be affected to different degrees by temporary, unpredictable or artificially maintained conditions and, accordingly, management should be appropriately cautious.

**Principle 7: The ecosystem approach should be undertaken at the appropriate spatial and temporal scales.**

The approach should be bounded by spatial and temporal scales that are appropriate to the objectives. Boundaries for management will be defined operationally by users, managers, scientists and indigenous and local peoples. Connectivity between areas should be promoted where necessary. The ecosystem approach is based upon the hierarchical nature of biological diversity characterized by the interaction and integration of genes, species and ecosystems.

**Principle 8: Recognizing the varying temporal scales and lag-effects that characterize ecosystem processes, objectives for ecosystem management should be set for the long term.**

Ecosystem processes are characterized by varying temporal scales and lag-effects. This inherently conflicts with the tendency of humans to favour short-term gains and immediate benefits over future ones.

**Principle 9: Management must recognize the change is inevitable.**

Ecosystems change, including species composition and population abundance. Hence, management should adapt to the changes. Apart from their inherent dynamics of change, ecosystems are beset by a complex of uncertainties and
potential "surprises" in the human, biological and environmental realms. Traditional disturbance regimes may be important for ecosystem structure and functioning, and may need to be maintained or restored. The ecosystem approach must utilize adaptive management in order to anticipate and cater for such changes and events and should be cautious in making any decision that may foreclose options, but, at the same time, consider mitigating actions to cope with long-term changes such as climate change.

**Principle 10: The ecosystem approach should seek the appropriate balance between, and integration of, conservation and use of biological diversity.**

Biological diversity is critical both for its intrinsic value and because of the key role it plays in providing the ecosystem and other services upon which we all ultimately depend. There has been a tendency in the past to manage components of biological diversity either as protected or non-protected. There is a need for a shift to more flexible situations, where conservation and use are seen in context and the full range of measures is applied in a continuum from strictly protected to human-made ecosystems.

**Principle 11: The ecosystem approach should consider all forms of relevant information, including scientific and indigenous and local knowledge, innovations and practices.**

Information from all sources is critical to arriving at effective ecosystem management strategies. A much better knowledge of ecosystem functions and the impact of human use is desirable. All relevant information from any concerned area should be shared with all stakeholders and actors, taking into account, inter alia, any decision to be taken under Article 8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Assumptions behind proposed management decisions should be made explicit and checked against available knowledge and views of stakeholders.

**Principle 12: The ecosystem approach should involve all relevant sectors of society and scientific disciplines.**

Most problems of biological-diversity management are complex, with many interactions, side-effects and implications, and therefore should involve the necessary expertise and stakeholders at the local, national, regional and international level, as appropriate.