

## **Project Update: September 2008**

### **I. Actual outcomes or progress:**

- Two field surveys were carried out at the designated field sites:  
The 1st fieldtrip has been carried out in October 11 to October 25, 2007 at the central provinces of Ninh Thuan Province (Ca Na, My Hung and Vinh Trung fishing village), Khanh Hoa Province (Vinh Truong, Cau Da fishing village, Dam souvenir central market and Nha Trang whole sale wet market), Phu Yen Province (Phu Hoa and An Dong Fishing village). The field staffs spent the time to deliver the questionnaire form to ask the reef users filling up (they are fishermen, and traders of the reef animals such as coral, giant clam, live reef food fish and marine aquarium fish). Several local authorities in 3 provinces belonging to the Department of Fisheries have contributed the statistical data in recent years about the exploitation status of reef in their vicinity for further review and promise to have close collaboration with the project activities when needed. In this fieldtrip the field staffs did the survey in depth about how the coral reef resources have been depleted in recent years at the central provinces based on examination of several fishing practices such as diving with the compressor (harvest all the things that diver can see underwater).

The 2nd fieldtrip has been carried out at the second week of March, 2008 at the Ninh Thuan Province, where was considered as the most “hotspot “ of intensive harvesting on the coral reefs. The purposes of this trip were to organize two onsite training workshops that focusing on two groups:

- 20 people represented for fishermen who their livelihoods depend on the harvesting of coral dwelling resources and the management staffs at the community based coral protected area of Thanh Hai commune – Workshop activities intend to provide the basic technical skills for livelihood alternation in the surrounding waters of the Thanh Hai Commune (Mariculture technique transferring: fish floating cage, abalone farming and Algae *Kappaphycus* sp farming)
- 100 high school students at the Thanh Hai high school, Thanh Hai Commune – Workshop activities intend to provide an overview about the benefits of the coral reefs and coral animals to the life of the people in the coastal areas, threats to the coral reefs and how to reduce the stress on this valuable ecosystem
- 01 paper has been published in Vietnamese journal (Vietnam Marine Journal)

### **II. Briefs of the initial assessment**

#### *1. Status of the capture fishery and trade on coral reef fishes*

The diving with compressor techniques are common found at the coral reef sites in the central provinces of Vietnam. The target groups focus on tiger shrimp fingerling, abalone, grouper fishes. Fishing seasons concentrate on December to April of the following year. The average of the fishing yield reaches 50 tons/village and occupies of 53% exploitable capture fishery at the near shore waters. Fishermen normally sell the products directly to the offshore trade ships that anchored outside of the vicinity of the villages. Several low economic value products left will be sold for tycoon that will re-sell them to tourist cities such as Nha Trang and Ho Chi Minh City. Grouper fishes, a high economic species, normally are intensively fished due to high price on the live fish food trade in Hongkong markets.

#### *2. Status of coral exploitation and trade on coral made products*

- The exploitation of hard coral groups seems to be the common practices in the coastal areas of the central provinces. Fishermen exploit the corals and sell for the tycoon at the local provinces.

Through a trade network, coral and coral made products will be sold at the souvenir shops in Nha Trang City, Ho Chi Minh City (tourist hub cities) even some of them has been sent to the north provinces such as Ha Long Bay city and Hanoi capital. In Khanh Hoa province, the Hon Khoi cement company keeps using the coral as the materials for processing. Annually it requires thousand tons of dead coral to produce cement. Unfortunately, though people knew that harvesting coral (dead or alive) was illegal practices according to Vietnam Fisheries Law but the local people still broke the laws due to “they needed something to eat rather than conservation the nature” – according to fishery survey results.

### *3. Recommendation*

- In order to mitigate the negative impacts of the local people on the coral reefs at the coastal areas, It was urgent need to implement some tasks as following:
- + Improving of the status fishery laws and enhancing the human capacity of the local officers to implement the law at the efficient ways
- + Carry out more onsite training course to enhance the local knowledge about the values of the coral reefs at their vicinity
- + Figure out the ways to improve the livelihoods alternation programs that has been carried out at the coastal areas through various forms such as money credits system, job training for young people or encourage local fishermen joints the tourist services sector, etc.

### **III. Works need to be done from now to the end of this year**

Writing reports on the status assessment of this expedition ongoing to be published