Marine Eco-Label Japan and promotion of sustainable fisheries in Japan

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1. Establishment of MEL Japan

2. Principles and Features of MEL Japan

3. Toward more equitable participation in international trade

4. The 2020 Summer Olympics (Tokyo 2020) and sustainable seafood sourcing
1. Establishment of MEL Japan

(1) Japanese stakeholders in the fishing industry and fisheries management established their own ecolabelling scheme, Marine Eco-Label Japan (MEL Japan) in 2007.

(2) Goal: Promotion of sustainable fisheries through respecting principle of co-management by fisheries community
1. Establishment of MEL Japan

(3) Why MEL Japan was established?
It is desirable to have our own certification scheme in Japan maximizing the expertise of Japanese stakeholders.

(4) Development
Started without restricting possibilities

What we actually do
- Certify Japanese fisheries
- Certify wild fisheries
- Export to foreign countries - under preparation
1. Establishment of MEL Japan

(5) Structure of MEL Japan

1) **Secretariat - Japan Fisheries Association**
   (The umbrella organization of the Japanese fishing industry)
The Association provides a variety of services to facilitate administration of the scheme, particularly logistical services and communications within and outside the scheme.

2) **Independent certification body**
   - **Japan Fisheries Resource Conservation Association**
The Association does work aiming to "Business related to conservation and cultivation for the fishery resources, control, hygiene, and the preservation of fishing grounds environment."
2. Principles and Features of MEL Japan

(1) Established in line with the FAO guidelines.
Three requirements of the MEL Japan standard
1) Fisheries are conducted under an established and effective management system
2) The target stock is maintained at a level that allows its sustainable utilization
3) Appropriate measures are taken for the preservation of the ecosystem.

(2) Ensures scientific and objective certification by independent certification entities.

Certification body:
Japan Fisheries Resource Conservation Association
2. Principles and Features of MEL Japan

(3) Co-management

1) Many small-scale fishers target a variety of species in Japan.
2. Principles and Features of MEL Japan

(3) Co-management

Fishermen share in the role of fisheries management and resource enhancement.

-In fishing communities in Japan, fishers have developed the concept of managing local fishery resources jointly and on their own to ensure the subsistence of their communities.

Makes the best use of ‘relevant traditional, fisher or community knowledge’ for assessment in accordance with the FAO guidelines.

“Common property regimes typically function at a local level to prevent the overexploitation of a resource system from which fringe units can be extracted.”

Nobel prize winner, Elinor Ostrom
2. Principles and Features of MEL Japan

(3) Co-management

Public regulations + Voluntary management of fishermen

Fishers and regional and central governments are united in participating in the current framework for resource recovery.
2. Principles and Features of MEL Japan

(4) Positive activities in harmony with diverse players

MEL Japan aims to create a positive cycle in which fishers, through ecolabel certification, give closer attention to resource management, reinforce cooperation with scientists and administrators, and contribute to the accumulation of scientific data and the improvement of information through fishing activities.

MEL Japan has certified 23 fisheries.
3. Toward more equitable participation in international trade

(1) Will eolabelling schemes create trade restrictions?

In the 14th session of the SUB-COMMITTEE ON FISH TRADE (Bergen, Norway, February 2014), the Sub-Committee expressed concerns over a range of issues relating to ecolabeling schemes, including their potential to create trade restrictions and generate increased costs. Many Members called upon the FAO to provide technical assistance to developing countries in meeting market access requirements for fisheries certification and in improving national capacity for sustainable fisheries management.
3. Toward more equitable participation in international trade

(2) Commitment of the Thai Government.

The Workshop on National Ecolabel for Marine Capture Fisheries was held in Bangkok, Thailand, on January 13-15, 2015.

-organized by the Thai Government with the support of the FAO

The purpose of the workshop: Discuss the possibility of establishing a national seafood ecolabeling scheme set up by stakeholders of the fisheries industry of a particular country, with experts were invited from around the world.
3. Toward more equitable participation in international trade

(3) Summary of the Workshop

The Workshop concluded that establishing a comprehensive national seafood ecolabeling scheme for Thailand would, at this point, be challenging and perhaps premature.

It was agreed that a first priority in considering next steps would be to determine the objective or preferred outcome of any such scheme including whether it was intended to inform consumers in the domestic or international market or both. Answers to these questions would guide factors to be taken into consideration in developing an ecolabeling scheme.

To establish a better understanding of next steps, the Working Group agreed that the Thai Government should initiate a dialogue with a broad range of stakeholders including private sector entities, NGOs, consumers and civil society to share information, increase understanding of the value to consumers and producers of seafood of an ecolabel and determine priorities in moving forward.
3. Toward more equitable participation in international trade

(4) Our future preference:
Promotion of seafood certification schemes responding to the needs of each country, including developing countries.
4. The 2020 Summer Olympics (Tokyo 2020) and sustainable seafood sourcing

Omotenashi (hospitality) with Japanese food!

It will be the Tokyo Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games to develop the sourcing policy.

‘Demonstrably sustainable, meeting the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries’ sounds reasonable.

MEL Japan is committed to promote the scheme not only for the Olympics but for sustainable Japanese fisheries.

Thank you for your kind attention!