



WWF-Malaysia / Eric Madeja

UPDATES FROM THE WATER

MARCH 2021

THAILAND BLUE SWIMMING CRAB

Gear Type: Gillnet and Traps

Volume: 12,000 MT

FIP Stage: 4 (Improvements in Fishing Practices or Fishery Management)

Progress Rating: B (Good Practices)

Start Date: February 2017

Thailand's Surat Thani blue swimming crab fishery has an export value of \$60 to \$80 million and includes approximately 1,300 small-scale vessels and 100 commercial vessels. Over the years, the blue swimming crab population had been dropping. Several issues facing the fishery led to the decline, including over-exploitation in heavily fished inshore areas, the harvest of undersized crabs and egg-carrying females, lack of a management plan or harvest strategy, and lack of enforcement capacity. Industry stakeholders created a fishery improvement project to address these challenges. COVID-19 did lead to some delays as the government issued an emergency decree in March 2020 that restricted travel. Even with the travel restrictions in place, the FIP has continued to work towards achieving tasks and milestones as laid out in the FIP workplan.

Over the last six months, there have been several achievements. A new length-based spawning potential ratio (LB-SPR) assessment methodology was used to assess the stock. Although the results deem the stock to be above the limit reference point (i.e., the point beyond which fishing is no longer considered sustainable), it is not certain that the stock is at maximum sustainable yield (i.e., the maximum amount that can be harvested without compromising the future availability of that resource), and more work needs to be done to limit uncertainty. Although there is still no national minimum landing size regulation, a few communities implemented their own minimum landing size and restricted access to seagrass nursery sites during recruitment periods.

A draft Fishery Management Plan has now been completed, and stakeholder consultation meetings will be held with the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft plan.

The FIP industry partners signed an MOU on traceability on blue swimming crab products including requirements and certificates.

A major development in the next 6 months will be the expansion of the FIP to include Chumphon to the north and Nakhon Sri Thammarat to the south.

Become a WWF FIP participant today by visiting:

<https://seafoodsustainability.org/fisheries/fishery-improvement-projects-signup>

Being a WWF FIP Participant provides a pre-competitive space for companies to engage with fisheries in their supply chains and leverage power across multiple companies to drive fishery improvements forward. By signing on to support a FIP, you are joining forces with other leaders in the industry that seek to help conserve marine ecosystems and advance the livelihoods of millions of people who depend on them.

WWF recognizes FIP participants on the industry website, SeafoodSustainability.org. WWF also works with FIP participants to communicate the benefits of FIPs among key buyers, sustainable business leaders, employees, environmental activists, and other key constituencies.

Together we can protect oceans and the food and livelihoods they can sustainably provide.

For more information or to partner with WWF, please visit SeafoodSustainability.org or contact us at info@seafoodsustainability.org