Forecasting system will raise fish haul to RM11bil

Larry Ralon

KOTA KINABALU: Mimos Berhad and the Malaysian Fisheries Development Authority (LKIM) signed a memorandum Saturday to develop a Fish Forecasting System (FFS) to help increase the country's fish production to a value of RM11billion by next year.

FFS is a computerised system that generates information on potential fishing zones to enable fishermen using it go directly there without having to waste time and energy detecting fish with conservative ways.

Once fully operational, the FFS is expected to benefit some 12,000 fishermen who are already using the system in Peninsular Malaysia.

The MoA was signed and exchanged between Mimos President and CEO, Datuk Abdul Wahab Abdullah, and Datuk Abdul Rahim Ismail, the LKIM Chairman, in a ceremony at Le Meridien.

Under the agreement, Mimos will design and develop the FFS including the development of a fish location forecasting model, database portal development and an information dissemination system to distribute the forecast fish locations.

LKIM will provide the content such as in-situ data, oceanography and acoustic data, fish catch and fish landing data.

Abdul Wahab said the FFS, which is expected to be available beginning April 2010 will enable fishermen to save between 20

Using tech to identify potential fishing zones

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and 40 per cent of the total time spent on locating potential fishing zones which is currently based on fishermen's tacit knowledge and experience.

"In addition, the FFS as Mimos' proof-of-concept for the fisheries industry will demonstrate that our technology platforms are able to cut across all verticals including traditional and non-traditional sectors," he said.

The integration of remote sensing data provided by the Malaysian Remote Sensing Agency in the FFS will play a crucial part in determining the potential fishing zones.

The FFS is expected to result in mation dissemination system for fishermen either through the Internet system, short-messaging-system or facsimile.

The fisheries industry is one of the main contributors of protein in Malaysia, currently involving 89,453 fishermen. The industry contributed 1.3 million metric tonnes of fish in 2007.

Abdul Rahim, meanwhile, said LKIM hopes the FFS would be expanded to East Malaysian states, particularly Sabah, under the Tenth Malaysia Plan (RMK-10).

With the availability of such advanced tools, a fisheries institute or school will be set up in the State to prepare the fishermen here in terms of knowledge and skills in using such new and advanced fishing technology.

FFS would be able to assist in the effort to ensure sustainable ways of fishing in the country, he said, adding LKIM has predicted fish production would increase to 1.4million metric tonnes between now and next year.

higher fishing productivity, enhance the livelihood of fishermen and achieve a sustainable development for the fisheries industry in Malaysia.

The MoA follows the FFS project's kick-off in August 2007. The FFS is a joint research and development (R&D) project between Mimos, Malaysian Remote Sensing Agency, Department of Fisheries Malaysia (DOF), LKIM and National Fishermen's Association of Malaysia (NEK-MAT) for the development of an efficient system for fish forecasting for a sustainable fisheries industry.

DOF's role is to collect oceanic and acoustic data obtained from the enumerator and studies carried out by the department. LKIM and NEKMAT will collect relevant data through appointment of enumerators and vessels and hand over the data to DOF for validation, the Remote Sensing Agency of Malaysia to receive and analyse satellite data for producing SST and Klorofil maps as well as develop and manage data base, and Mimos to produce models for potential fish catching zones and planned development system which involves model design, database and portal concept as well as information for dissemination.

LKIM and NEKMAT will also manage the fish forecasting infor-