

SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

ELEVENTH REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING ON FISHERIES

(Noumea, New Caledonia, 5-10 December 1979)

COUNTRY STATEMENT - FIJI

FIJI FISHERIES

1. Fisheries Division resources in 1978 comprised 86 established staff (of which 12 were seconded to other Departments or Organisations for all or part of the year), 8 aid personnel, a total expenditure of \$763,131, 13 vehicles, ten operational vessels and a total building area of 2,294 m².
2. The constraints to the overall objective to increase fish production in Fiji are:
 - (a) The resource has not been defined and its ability to withstand increased exploitation is not clearly understood.
 - (b) The scarcity of suitable boats and fishing gear at subsistence village and low technology commercial levels.
 - (c) The inadequacy of servicing facilities for small motors, boats and fishing gear in rural areas.
 - (d) The absence of an effective distribution and marketing network.
 - (e) The lack of knowledge of fish processing techniques and available overseas markets for processed fish.
 - (f) The control of most inshore fishing areas and relatively undisciplined allocation of permits discourages long-term capital investment by commercial fishermen.
 - (g) There is a lack of sufficient incentives and encouragement for young people to join the industry.
 - (h) The scarcity of experienced extension officers and an absence of efficient training programmes for subsistence and commercial fishermen.

- (i) The capital restriction on rapid expansion of the Ika Corporation fleet to exploit the known tuna resources and on the provision of port facilities for such a high technology fishery.
 - (j) The absence of training facilities for pole and line fishing, engineers and store management staff for the Ika Corporation.
 - (k) The possible discontinuity of both supply of raw tuna fishes and stable markets for the canned product.
3. The total weight of fish sold at retail outlets was 1869 tonnes worth \$2.42 million, a 17.7% increase on total weight and 36.2% increase in value over 1977. 845.6 t were sold at municipal markets, 99.4 t by the National Marketing Authority and 1024 t at hotels, shops and other outlets.
 4. An estimated 4,085 t of fish were caught by subsistence fishermen.
 5. An estimated 1032 t of aquatic non-fish products were sold at retail outlets; 1012 t valued at \$396,487 were sold at municipal markets.
 6. 10,943 t of fish were landed at Levuka, a 50.7% increase on 1977 catches. 2524.6 t were caught by Ika Corporation vessels.
 7. 6,028 t of tuna worth \$5.62 million were processed by the Pacific Fishing Company to produce 415,319 cartons of canned tuna. 385,703 cartons valued at \$9.67 million were exported and 13,815 cartons sold locally for \$162,523.
 8. 4,263 t of unprocessed frozen fish worth \$4.2 million were exported by the Pacific Fishing Company.
 9. 555.2 t of fish meal worth \$166,800, 34.4 t of fish oil worth \$9,990 and 1,350 t of ice worth \$36,790 were sold locally by Pacific Fishing Company.
 10. 179.8 t of trochus shells (\$79,242), 19.8 t of mother-of-pearl shells (\$21,797), 24,308 live fish (\$23,381), 15.3 t of bêche-de-mer (\$51,429), 55.6 t of shark fins (\$205,259) and 3.2 t of local frozen fish (\$6,150) were exported.
 11. A total of 10,565 t of fish and fish products worth \$14.31 million were exported.

12. 14.7 t of fish and fish products worth \$14.7 million were imported.
13. Estimated total local fish and fish products production was 9,970 t worth \$9.7 million.
14. Detailed analyses of species composition, price, distribution and catch per unit effort of all fish production in Fiji was undertaken.
15. A detailed survey has shown that Fiji's baitfish stocks are large and robust with a 36.9% increase in bait catch to 61,574 buckets not significantly affecting catch-per-unit-effort.
16. Methods were developed, fishing grounds mapped and the economic viability of exploiting deepwater snappers determined.
17. A comprehensive analyses of 1978 tuna catches is presented.
18. A report on the South Pacific Commission Skipjack survey is given; 9,338 tunas were tagged in Fiji waters and 6 of the 946 recaptures were taken elsewhere in the South Pacific.
19. A preliminary assessment of giant clam populations confirmed that overexploitation may be having detrimental effects on stocks.
20. A bêche-de-mer resource assessment study was initiated in August and has already produced very significant findings applicable to all South Pacific stocks.
21. A preliminary study on ten mangrove types has enabled more realistic productivity assessments to be made in proposed reclamation areas.
22. Analysis of sea surface temperatures showed an annual change of 3°C and that the temperature north of Vanua Levu was significantly higher than the Koro Sea (+1.4°C).
23. Male grass carp showed signs of maturity at Naduruloulou Research Station.
24. A detailed report of the 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ years work at Raviravi was prepared and negotiation continued for a joint commercial prawn culture venture.
25. Detailed feasibility studies of baitfish culture and Macrobrachium rosenbergii culture were prepared.
26. The Fisheries Division Processing Unit trained ten rural groups and produced 7,392 kg of bêche-de-mer worth \$25,312 and 4,693 kg of salted mullet worth \$9,384.

27. Technical advice was given on 153 successful applications for Development Bank loans totalling \$244,243.
 28. \$29,930 worth of subsidised fishing gear was sold by the Fisheries Division.
 29. Fisheries Division ice production to commercial fishermen increased by 84% to 1388 t.
 30. Four 28 ft. catamarans and two 28 ft. single hulled diesel vessels were built for commercial fishermen.
 31. Twenty-four fishing groups landed 37.5 t worth \$25,537.
 32. 888 fishing licences were issued and 975 vessels registered an 18.9% increase in licences and 15.2% increase in registrations over 1977.
 33. Draft regulations for fishing in the proposed 200-mile exclusive economic zone were prepared as required under Section 20 of the Marine Spaces Act, 1977.
 34. The Fisheries Division library was reorganised, 40 radio programmes (in Hindi, Fijian and English) were made and seven information pamphlets prepared.
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