

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION**

**TWENTY-FIFTH REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING ON FISHERIES**  
(Noumea, New Caledonia, 14-18 March 1994)

**NEW PROJECT PROPOSALS IN INTEGRATED COASTAL FISHERIES  
MANAGEMENT AND REMOTE SENSING/ GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION  
SYSTEMS**

(Paper prepared by the Secretariat)

**INTRODUCTION**

1 This paper details two major initiatives presently being considered by the Coastal Fisheries Programme (CFP) and potential funding donors for implementation during the period 1994-1996. Confirmation is sought from the meeting that these initiatives are fully in line with regional fisheries development and management priorities and should be integrated into the CFP work programme.

**COASTAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT**

2 The 24th (August 1992) RTMF recommended that the Secretariat seek funding to enable continuation of the work of the Fish Handling and Processing Project (FHPP) and the Inshore Fisheries Research Project (IFRP). Both projects were subjected to an internal review by the funding agency, the UK Government, in late 1993. Although the written outputs of the review have not been made available to the Commission, informal indications indicate that both projects received favourable evaluations.

3 With the support of both RTMF 24 and the funding donor, the Commission has therefore put forward a further submission to the same donor for funding for a new project which will build on the work of both the IFRP and the FHPP. The new project, entitled the Integrated Coastal Fisheries Management Project (ICFMP), includes information gathering, advisory and training functions which overall aim to promote the development of inshore fishery exploitation regimes that incorporate both more sustainable harvesting practices as well as greater attention to product value-adding and avoidance of waste and by-catch.

4 The project proposal is still being reviewed by the UK Government and may undergo further modifications before funding approval is granted. Indications at present, however, are that the project will support three professional positions (two scientists and one post-harvest specialist) within the Coastal Fisheries Programme, as well as two project assistants. In addition, provision is made for three one-year work-experience attachments, under which national fisheries officers can be attached to the CFP and gain hands-on experience in the work of the project, as well as helping in the achievement of project objectives. It is expected that officers attached to the project would work on issues that relate at least in part to their own countries, and would serve as focal points for project follow-up activities after returning home.

5 Much of the first year of the project will be spent in a major information gathering and consolidation phase. A primary task during year 1 will be the establishment of a database containing as much statistical information as can be acquired on fishery production levels and trends in the region. This will be supplemented by market surveys and statistical information that will be gathered through the programmes of the Forum Fisheries Agency. The combined data sets will be used to identify potential target fisheries where the sustainability of exploitation could be improved through a combination of management and post-harvest activities. Resource and post-harvest assessment field projects can if necessary be carried out in connection with the identification of target fisheries.

6 At the end of project year 1 a *Workshop on Inshore Fisheries Management* will be convened jointly by SPC and FFA (with major funding from the UNDP Regional Fishery Support and National Capacity Building Project, as well as possibly other sources). The workshop is expected to be held in the first half of 1995, and will build on the successful 1988 *Workshop on Inshore Fishery Resources*, which was the inaugural activity of the IFRP. The meeting will serve as a forum for examining and discussing the results of the project data gathering phase. The meeting will also assist in the identification of at least 6, and more probably 10 or more, project target sites that will be the focus of activity during phase 2 (years 2 and 3) of the project.

7 Project target sites will ideally be selected to provide a range of fishery situations, in terms of both species composition and exploitation regime, and according to some or all of the following criteria:

potential economic and social benefits to be derived from improved management;

potential for post-harvest improvements to contribute towards improved management;

sustainability of improved management regimes following SPC intervention;

opportunities for cost sharing or recovery to support SPC intervention.

8 Following an official request and a formal commitment of support from the government concerned, the Commission would work with appropriate local government departments (fisheries, environment, commerce, etc., depending on the country) to undertake detailed local studies and put in place activities that will promote more sustainable local exploitation regimes while at the same time encouraging more local value-added and improved post-harvest practices.

9 In addition to conferring local benefits, the target sites will also serve as a means of evaluating and comparing the successes of different management approaches and post-harvest ventures. The project target site selection process will ensure that this information will be of value to other countries of the region. Information will be actively disseminated through the training attachments that are an integral part of the project, through study and training visits, through project technical reports, and through CFP newsletters and Special Interest Group Bulletins.

### **REMOTE SENSING PROJECT**

10 For some years the Secretariat has been trying to put in place a facility through which remotely sensed data can be applied to questions of inshore fishery resource assessment and management. During 1993, significant progress was made in negotiations with New Caledonia and French Polynesia regarding a tripartite project which would address this issue and which could be submitted to the European Union for funding under the French Overseas Countries and Territories allocation of the 7th European Development Fund. Funds from this source are not normally available to ACP countries except through projects that formally involve French territories.

11 The Commission now has the responsibility for drafting up a final project proposal for review by the two territorial administrations and formal submission to the EU. This should have been done late in 1993 but has been delayed due to professional staff commitments. The delay does, however, permit review of the project concept by the present meeting prior to finalisation of the proposal, which should be complete by the end of March.

12 The project, provisionally entitled *Application of Remotely Sensed Information to the Management of Pacific Island Reef and Lagoon Fisheries*, will provide for the employment of a Remote Sensing Technician within the Coastal Fisheries Programme for a 3-year period, and the establishment of a computer-based Geographic Information System that will permit the integration of remotely sensed data with other data sets, in particular the database to be established as part of the ICFMP (see above). Funding provision will also be made for the purchase of satellite imagery and other types of data (e.g. digitised aerial photographs), as well as for data processing, cartographic services and software/ database development by technical agencies within the New Caledonian and French Polynesian territorial administrations.

13 The Project, which is expected to commence in mid-1995, will function in a similar way to the ICFMP and is designed to complement and enhance it. Project activities will be initiated soon after the *Workshop on Inshore Fishery Resource Management* which, as well as providing guidance on the selection of field project sites for the ICFMP, will fulfil a similar role for the Remote Sensing Project by identifying at least 6, and possibly more, sites where there appears to be substantial potential for improved fishery understanding or management through the acquisition, interpretation and integration of remotely sensed data. It is possible that one project site will be located in New Caledonia, and another in French Polynesia, subject to the wishes of these partners in the project. The remaining four or more sites will be selected as per the ICFMP, according to technical criteria to be examined by the workshop, and following official country requests and demonstrated commitment to the project goals.

14 The first year of the project will see the establishment of an SPC Inshore Marine Resources Geographic Information System that can be used to compile geo-referenced data on the region as a whole, as well as subsets that relate to nations, archipelagoes, islands, or smaller sub-units. This data set will build on and expand the usefulness of the database created during year 1 of the ICFMP, and could also provide a foundation for the establishment of national-level inshore fishery geographic information systems using computers and software already in place in many national fisheries offices.

15 During years 2 and 3, the project will shift into a more applied, field oriented phase, during which the focus will be on the project target sites. Activities will include data acquisition, integration with other data types, field ground-truthing, and data interpretation/ application for specific resource assessment and management purposes. As with the ICFMP, substantial effort will be dedicated to information dissemination so that the results from each target site may have application and find their value in other countries or locations.

#### **ACTION REQUIRED**

16 The meeting is requested to consider these outline proposals developed by the Secretariat, and to formulate appropriate recommendations for transmission to CRGA so that the Secretariat may receive the necessary authority to incorporate RTMF's wishes into the CFP work programme.