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**SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION**

**TWENTY-FIRST REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING ON FISHERIES**  
**(Nouméa, New Caledonia, 7 - 11 August 1989)**

**Country Statement**  
**Vanuatu**

## INTRODUCTION.

Development on the coastal fisheries of Vanuatu has been a major drive in the department of fisheries for the last 7 years through the Village Fisheries Development Programme (VFDP). This programme has made attempts to establish the coastal fishery previously non-existent. The VFDP now coming to an end will be superseded by Fisheries Extension Service Project in order to continue on the gains achieved under the VFDP. However the various evaluations carried out on the VFDP both by the department and independent consultancies strongly indicate the need to revise the department's efforts and plan of actions. This has led to some major changes to the original document of extension project.

## COASTAL FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT.

### Proposed changes to the original plan:

The Extension Service is a logical progression of the Village Fisheries Development Project. When the plan for the Extension Service was first formulated the VFDP appeared to have exceeded all expectations, incorporating more than 100 small scale fishing enterprises. This led to the original concept of the Extension Service, with 11 Centres planned. At the time this seemed appropriate to the needs of the industry.

As a result of an in-house evaluation of the Extension Service and the findings of the Shepard Report, it became evident during 1988 that a realistic approach was necessary. Clearly the level of fishing effort varies from island to island throughout Vanuatu, depending on a number of social, economic and biological considerations. It was therefore decided that the demand for Extension Services could be met by a smaller number of Extension Centres than originally planned, with the level of support (capital investment) more closely matching expected benefits (fish production).

A number of other changes have been incorporated into the revised Extension and Training Programme, briefly outlined as follows :

#### 1. Operation of Palekula Workshop and Box-Making Plant

An ex-expatriate engineer is to be engaged for Palekula Workshop to make necessary modifications to and operate the polystyrene box-making plant, train a national counterpart to take over operation of the Workshop Manager, train him in principles of refrigeration and assist in operations of the mobile workshop outboard M/V "Mekano".

## 2. Leasing Scheme

This Scheme is to be administered by the Extension Service, and will enable interested parties to operate a fishing project without the burden of large loans and interest payments. In the past fishing projects have been approved and have gone straight into securing a loan etc. with minimal training and experience of what maybe involved in fishing. Therefore the majority of these fishermen are somewhat disillusion when later faced with the difficulties of fishing. Under this scheme it is anticipated that the fishermen will be carefully screened before final approval.

The Scheme will largely be operated in conjunction with the Training Centre. Those finishing an approved training course will then be able to lease a boat and their performance closely monitored for a trial period of perhaps six months. Leases boats will also be available to existing projects, subject to availability. The department is to supply these lease boats from boats currently in the department's possession, by buying back boats that are presently in the industry but are not operational, or by building new boats at the boatyard in Santo.

## 3. Training Centre

The Training Centre is to go ahead as planned. New recruits to the industry would have to attend an approved training course for one month before operating a boat through the leasing scheme. Established fishermen would also have the opportunity to have their skills upgraded through re-training.

The boats "bought back" through the Leasing Scheme, and which are attached to the training centre, will be repaired and maintained by the students in a training situation. The used outboards would also be overhauled by the students, thereby providing invaluable "hands-on" training under supervision. The new recruit would operate a leased boat for a period of six months, during which time the boat would be managed by the Extension Service and the recruit would receive a percentage of the catch. At the end of this time a successful recruit would have the option to purchase a boat, either new or used. By continued evaluation of his performance over an extended period, it is hoped that this system of training will result in more full-time, and better trained, will an "in-built" fishermen being employed , in the industry.

## 4. Monitoring & Evaluation

As part of the Extension Service there will be an "in-built" system of monitoring the work of :

- a) Individual fisherman,
- b) Extension Centres,
- c) the Training Centre, and
- d) the overall effectiveness of the Service.

One Extension Officer is to be responsible for continually updating the department's records of catch rates, catch per unit effort and the net profit or loss of individual fisher-men. He would also monitor expenditures of the Extension Centres and production levels on a area by area basis, so ensuring rapid recognition of problem areas so that the Extension Service can adapt to the changing needs of the commercial fishery.

#### OCEANIC FISHERY.

The SPFC (South Pacific Fishing Company) base at Palekula currently wholly owned by the government of Vanuatu is continuing with its operations using over 1000 tonnes of its 2000 tonnes cold storage capacity. There are 43 Taiwanese licensed fishing vessel (long liners) currently registered with SPFC, employing about 130 Ni-Vanuatu as crew men. The government is encouraging any interested groups that may wish to come in to manage and operate this fishing base.

#### FISHERIES REGULATIONS.

With the appointment of a fisheries inspector the department has step up its policing on regulations with regards to green snails, trochus and lobsters. So far this year the department has taken 7 offenders to court and have successfully prosecuted all. This is quickly taking the message across to the general public in particular the buyers (restaurants, hotels etc.) that conservation of fisheries resource is a major concern of the department.