

SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

TWENTIETH REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING ON FISHERIES  
(Noumea, New Caledonia, 1 – 5 August 1988)

**RESTRUCTURING OF SPC FISHERIES PROGRAMMES**  
(Paper Prepared by the Secretariat)

1. The attached document was presented to CRGA 9 and reports on the action taken by the Secretariat to restructure the SPC Fisheries Programmes in response to the suite of recommendations to this effect from the 1987 Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries and later endorsed by the 27th South Pacific Conference. CRGA noted the changes made to the staff structure and approved the establishment of the new position of Secretary to the Fisheries Coordinator.
2. The revised programme structure will be discussed in detail under Agenda Item 4.

RESTRICTED

SPC/CRGA 9/WP/88  
26 April 1988

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

## SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

NINTH MEETING OF THE  
COMMITTEE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIONS  
(Noumea, New Caledonia, 23 - 27 May 1988)

### RESTRUCTURING OF SPC FISHERIES PROGRAMMES

Paper presented by the Secretariat

#### I Background

1. Under direction from SPC member countries, and in support of national and regional initiatives aimed at obtaining the maximum long-term economic and social benefits for Pacific Island countries from the exploitation of their marine resources, the SPC work programme in fisheries has expanded rapidly in recent years and is now the Commission's largest single activity. It is broadly divisible into two areas, and provides a balance of inshore and oceanic fisheries projects which nevertheless show considerable overlap and integration. They relate respectively to the development and management of small scale inshore fisheries (Coastal Fisheries Programme) with the focus on training and the provision of technical and scientific advice and assistance at national and regional levels; and to the conduct of a major programme of scientific research on behalf of member countries (Tuna and Billfish Assessment Programme) to generate the resource information necessary for the rational exploitation and sound management of the region's rich oceanic fisheries resources. The annual Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries (RTMF) has played a crucial role in shaping and guiding these programmes to ensure they retain their relevance and effectiveness.

2. The Tuna and Billfish Programme (TBAP) was selected for independent review by the 1986 South Pacific Conference. The evaluation reports of the TBAP prepared by consultants Mr T. Curtin, and Messrs J. Crossland and S.T. Cavuilati, were critically reviewed by the 19th Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries (RTMF) in August 1987. The wide ranging discussions which ensued emphasised the increasing inter-dependence of activities between

the two major fisheries programmes, the TBAP and the Coastal Fisheries Programme, and stressed the need for better overall co-ordination and direction to ensure that future activities and outputs remain closely linked to country needs and priorities. To this end, the meeting recommended that a **Fisheries Co-ordinator**, be appointed to provide overall co-ordination and direction to all South Pacific Commission activities in fisheries including the TBAP.

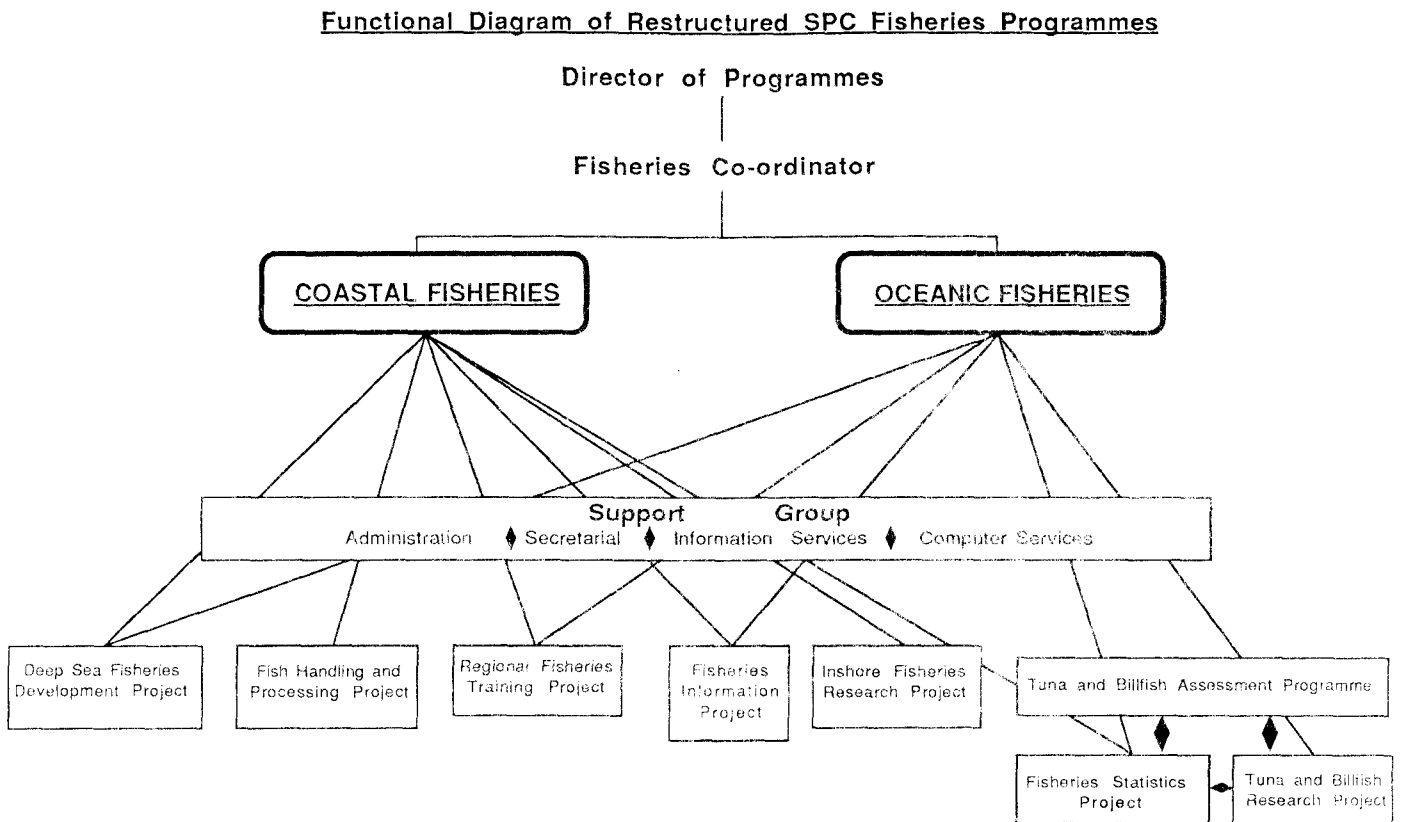
3. The RTMF passed a further further eleven recommendations aimed at improving the responsiveness and effectiveness of the TBAP, several of which were more broadly applicable to all fisheries activities. In particular they called for greater efforts to ensure a more timely response to country requests for assistance, and increased country travel and contact between programme staff and national counterparts. These initiatives were fully supported by the Secretariat and all twelve recommendations were endorsed by the CRGA 8 and adopted by the 27th South Pacific Conference. The Secretariat undertook to complete its ongoing internal review of the existing project structure and activities of both fisheries programmes, and to report the results to the CRGA 9.

## II Reorganisation of the SPC Fisheries Programmes

4. The deliberations of the 19th RTMF, while focused on the review of the TBAP, encompassed all SPC fisheries work programme activities. These discussions led to the call for the creation of a Fisheries Co-ordinator post and limited restructuring of the programmes, and emphasised the importance that countries attach to the fisheries activities of the SPC. A number of delegates stressed their concern that any reorganisation should result in a more timely delivery of programme services to member countries and not merely add an unnecessary extra tier to the Management structure, a move which was seen to be counter-productive.

5. Having due regard to the above concerns, the Secretariat has reviewed the existing staff structure and activities with a view to further improving the technical services provided to member countries through the more effective utilisation of existing resources, and with the over-riding concern that such improvements should be accomplished as far as possible with little or no increase in overall core funding requirements. After careful consideration, a revised programme structure has been adopted. A functional outline of the new organisation is presented in Figure 1 below, and full details given in Attachment I. The previous fisheries programme structure is presented in Attachment II.

FIGURE I.



### III Comments on the Reorganisation

6. In the Secretariat's view, the establishment of the position of Fisheries Co-ordinator provides for necessary overall co-ordination of fisheries activities, and that further improvements in the ability of the programme to meet country needs could be best achieved through a process of fine tuning, building on the strengths of existing projects and promoting improvements with services provided to member countries through the more effective use of the resources available within both major programme areas.

7. The division into coastal and oceanic fisheries has been retained as this reflects functional differences in the activities and responsibilities of each programme area. Brief comments on any significant changes to the original programme structure, particularly where these have budgetary implications, are given below:

#### *i) Fisheries Co-ordinator*

8. As the senior professional position within the programme and indeed within the Commission, it was considered essential that this post be funded from within the core budget. The existing core budget position of Fisheries Adviser has been redesignated to undertake this role at a salary scale equivalent to P1 plus bonus to reflect the increased responsibilities of the position. The scale of remuneration and/or type of benefit has yet to be determined and several options are presented for CRGA consideration in WP.30.

#### *ii) Coastal Fisheries*

9. With the redesignation of the Fisheries Adviser post, additional technical and managerial responsibilities have devolved to staff in existing projects. The approach adopted has been to strengthen the technical and administrative capacity of each project wherever necessary, and in the case of field oriented projects where staff have a heavy duty travel commitment, projects in related functional areas have been grouped to provide mutual administrative support and continuity. Several positions have been upgraded to reflect their increased responsibilities (FTO, FHPO), but in each case, the additional costs are relatively small and can be absorbed by the existing project budgets.

10. Consistent with the importance attached to training by member countries, the Regional Fisheries Training project, established in 1985 to act as a vehicle for the development and organisation of specialised training courses in response to country demand, has rapidly developed into a major activity area within the Commission. The technical and administrative responsibilities of the Fisheries Training Officer post have expanded accordingly and are further increased within the new structure. A proposal for the establishment of an Assistant Fisheries Training Officer (WP.6) to provide much needed general support to the project is now before the CRGA for consideration.

11. The DSFD Project and the FNPP, both field oriented development advisory projects, have been grouped under the direction of the Fisheries Development Officer (originally called Assistant Fisheries Officer). The information function has been removed from this position which should enable the FDO to play a more active field advisory role in future. The Fish Handling and Processing Officer position has been regraded to P3 in view of the high level of professional qualifications and experience required in post harvest technology to meet the technical, advisory and training role of this position. In addition, the FPO will assume administrative responsibility for the DSFD Project in the absence of the FDO.

12. The Inshore Fisheries group of projects combine two new projects, the Inshore Fisheries Research Project, and the Fisheries Information Project, under the direction of the Senior Inshore Fisheries Research Scientist (SIFS). Both projects were approved by the 1987 South Pacific Conference and are now in the early stages of implementation.

### *iii) Oceanic Fisheries*

13. From the 1987 evaluation process the TBAP has emerged with a revised mission statement which encapsulates country needs and concerns in this important area. The suite of TBAP review recommendations endorsed by CRGA 8 and approved by the 1987 SPC Conference have been taken into account in planning future activities, and reorganising this major programme to meet the challenges of the future.

14. In previous years, the activities of the TBAP had been directed largely to the analysis of data generated by the earlier Skipjack Survey Assessment Programme (SSAP) to provide the first scientific assessments of tuna stocks in the SPC area, and the establishment and maintenance of a Regional Oceanic Fisheries Database as a service function to member countries. While upgrading these assessments and maintaining the database remain of high priority, new emphasis is being given to the implementation of field research activities to answer stock assessment and fishery interaction questions at both regional and national levels, and the provision of technical and advisory services of direct assistance to individual countries.

15. In addition, the TBAP is about to embark on a major, new, large-scale tagging programme that will add substantially to existing knowledge of the yellowfin and skipjack stocks in the region. Planning for the implementation of the Regional Tuna Tagging Project, proposed for EEC funding under Lome III is proceeding on the basis that funds should be available in early 1989. This is a major field research programme with a budget of US\$4.1 million and will involve 6 new staff positions which are shown in the revised structure. This project will become the major focus for TBAP research activities over the triennium 1989-91.

16. To prepare for this major expansion in research activity, and in recognition of the increasing importance of the statistical services required both to member countries and in support of TBAP research initiatives, the TBAP has been split into two integral but functionally separate projects, the Fisheries Statistics Project and the Tuna and Billfish Research Project. This provides a clearer definition of staff responsibilities and activities within the scope of the TBAP, and further recognises the role of the Fisheries Statistics Project in supporting other SPC activities.

17. The Tuna Programme Co-ordinator post has been reclassified as P1 (levels 4-6) in line with the CRGA 6 decision and redesignated as Chief Scientist - TBAP. The Senior Fisheries Scientist in charge of the Tuna and Billfish Research Project has been retained at P1 (levels 1-3) in view of the added responsibilities associated with the planned implementation of the Regional Tuna Tagging Project. Recognising the need to attract and retain internationally recognised and qualified scientists for the work of this project, all other existing grades have been maintained.

18. The services of the TBAP Computer Systems Manager have been extended to all fisheries projects.

*iv) Secretarial Assistance*

19. To provide secretarial assistance and support to the Fisheries Co-ordinator a new position of Secretary will be required. It is recommended that this be established at the S3 level with funding to be secured from extra budgetary sources. While secretarial assistance is built into each project or programme as far as possible, typing services will be extended across project boundaries as required, to ensure that all professional staff receive the optimum support possible given available resources. If this recommendation is approved, it is proposed that the secretary to the Tuna and Billfish Programme be reduced to the S4 level. The seniority of the Secretary to the Fisheries Co-ordinator is therefore maintained and her responsibility to ensure the secretarial assistance to the whole programme is enhanced.

## Action Required

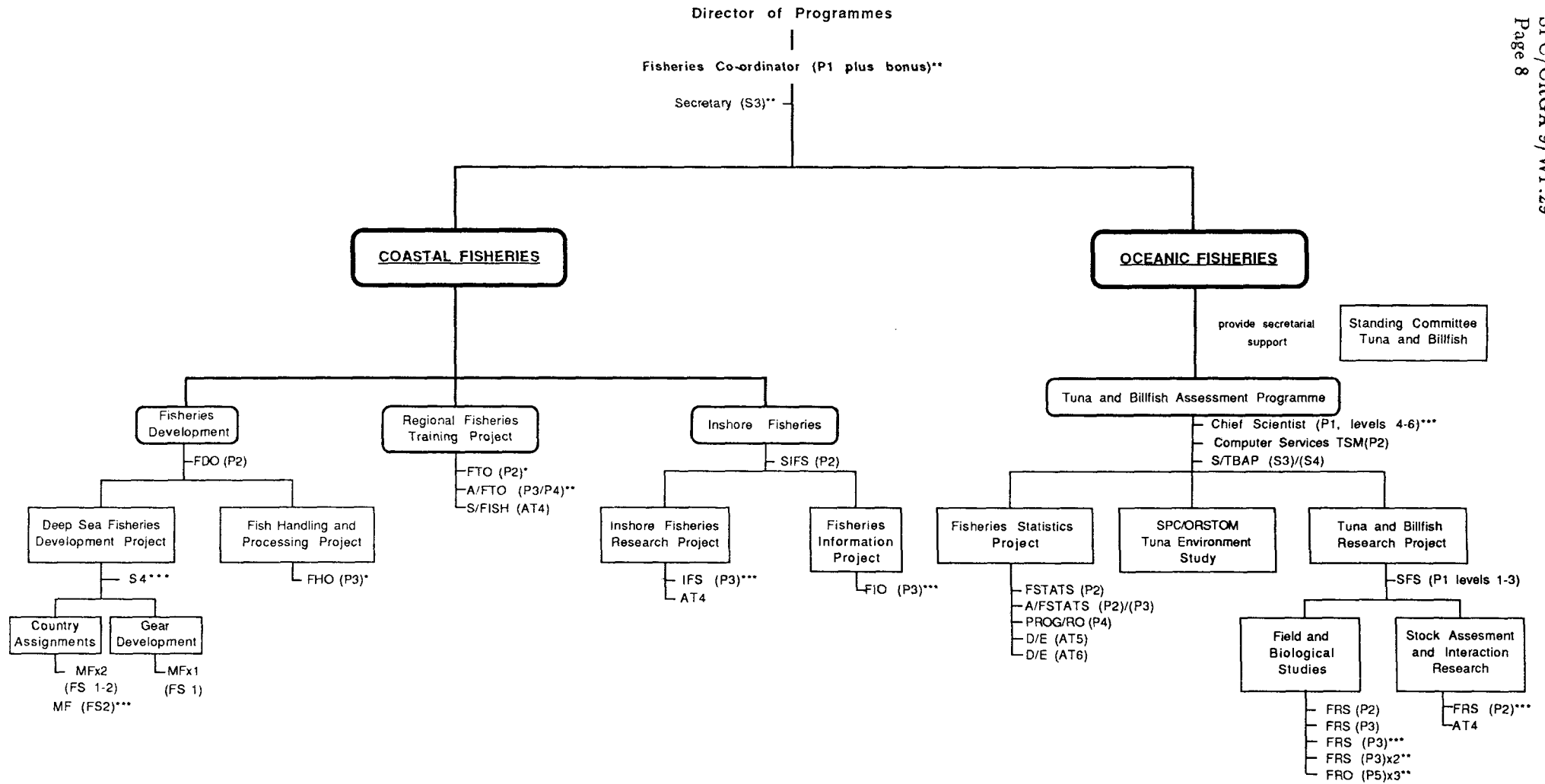
20. CRGA is invited to

(1) note the changes made to the structure of the SPC Fisheries Programmes in line with the RTMF recommendations endorsed by CRGA 8, and adopted by the 1987 South Pacific Conference, and

(2) approve the establishment of the new position of Secretary to the Fisheries Co-ordinator.

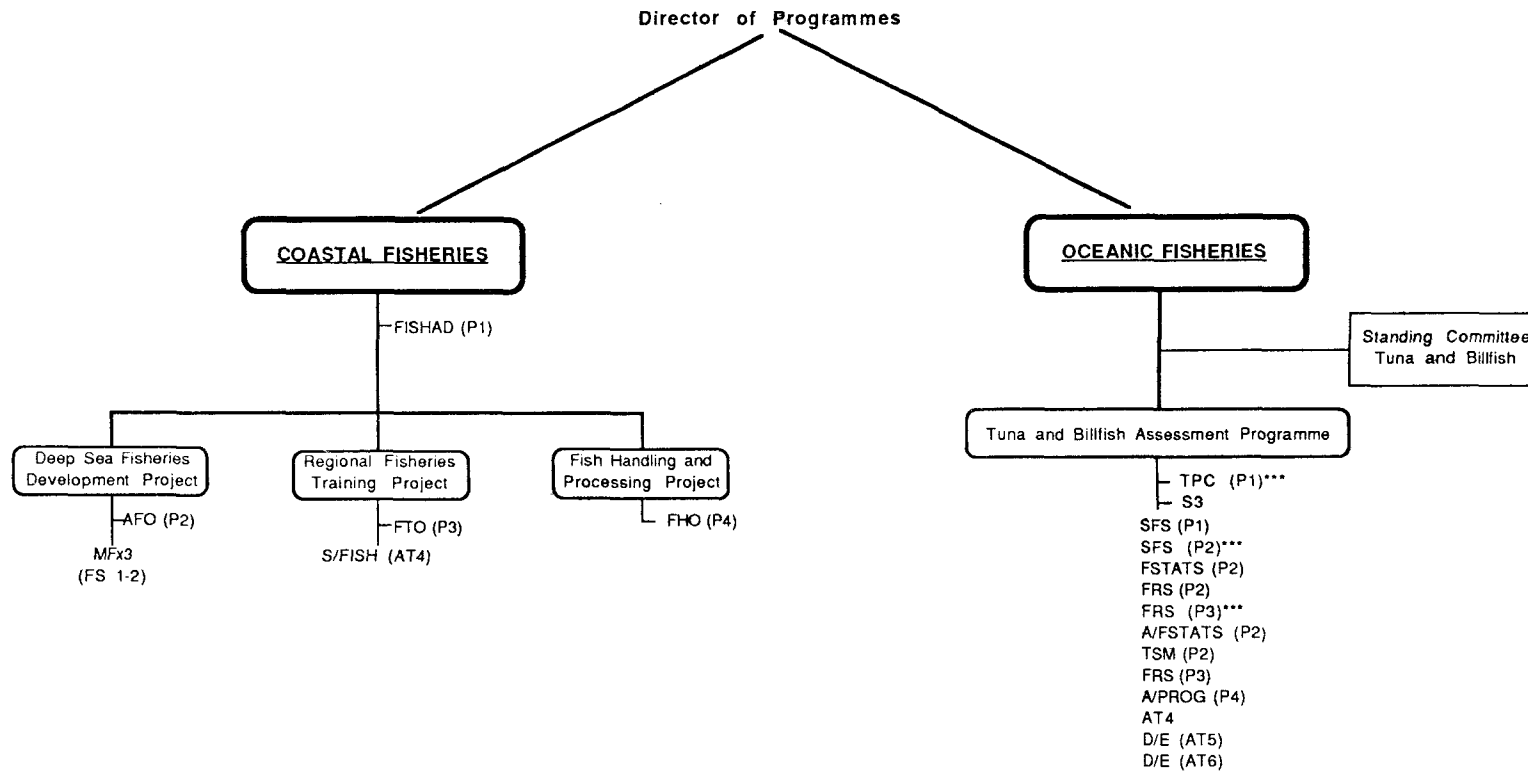


Revised SPC Fisheries Programme Structure



\* Position Upgraded  
 \*\* New Position  
 \*\*\* Position Vacant

1987 SPC Fisheries Programme Structure



\*\*\* Position Vacant