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Considerations of a Workshop on the Law of the Sea  
in the Southwest Pacific

The International Center for Living Aquatic Resources

Management is considering ways in which it can be helpful to the people of the Southwest Pacific in their management of the fishery resources within extended zones of jurisdiction. The extension of jurisdiction provides a significant opportunity for the people of the island states and territories to acquire a greater share of the benefits from the use of the fishery resources that migrate through their waters. However, it also provides a major challenge, in that the full realization of these benefits depends upon the ability of the people within the region to adopt effective management and enforcement measures that are within budgetary and manpower constraints. Difficult problems will be faced both in the governance of the regional agency to be created and in meeting the requirements within individual zones of jurisdiction.

The task of improving ability to deal with the problems emerging from the changes in the law of the sea is common to all coastal states throughout the world. In Southeast Asia, ICLARM is attempting to help in this task by holding a workshop in November 1978, which is being jointly sponsored with the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. This workshop will bring together a small number of influential government officials from the ASEAN states to discuss approaches to the

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solution of some of the emerging problems and to stimulate increased research. The workshop will be based, in part, upon a study of law of the sea problems in Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific, being done for ICLARM by Dr. Francis T. Christy, Jr.

Although the specific problems of the Southwest Pacific are different than those of Southeast Asia, the need to improve the ability to deal with the problems is the same. Thus, a workshop bringing together the people from the region and seeking to develop useful approaches to the solution of the problems may be valuable and such a workshop is planned sometime during the first half of 1979. In particular, it may be desirable to focus on those problems associated with the acquisition of information, the formulation of regulations, and the enforcement of regulations and agreements.

It is premature, at this time, to specify the exact details of the workshop, in view of the pending creation of the regional agency and the developing plans of the South Pacific Commission for a Law of the Sea workshop in November. ICLARM is anxious that its workshop be as valuable as possible and, therefore, wishes to avoid duplicating the program of the SPC and to prepare a program that will be relevant to the activities of the regional agency. ICLARM will soon be contacting individuals and institutions in the region in this regard.

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