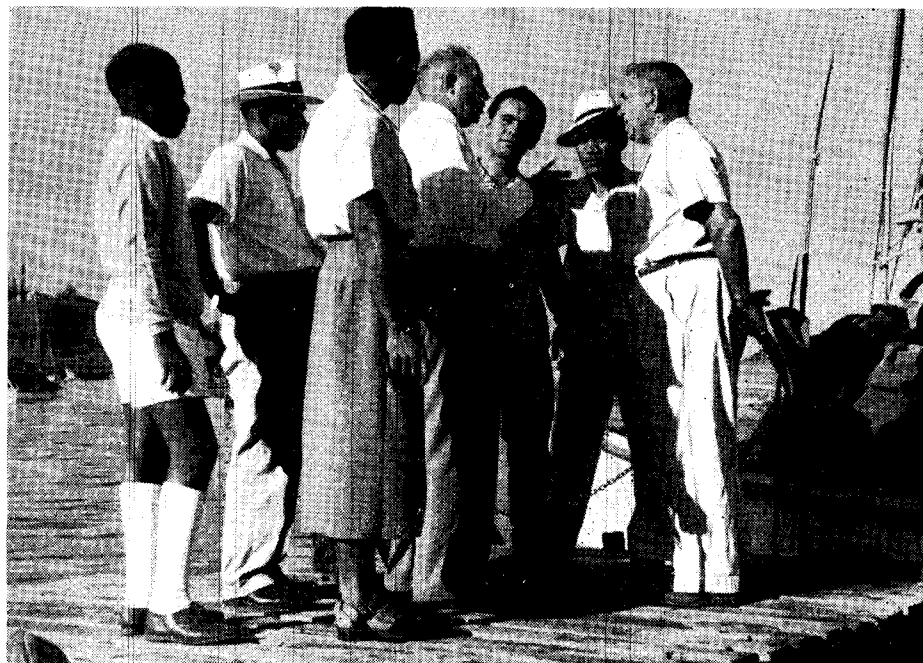


# South Pacific Fisheries Training Course

## Closes

Twenty-five trainees from fourteen Pacific island territories attended the Fisheries Training Course held under SPC-FAO auspices at Noumea from November 19 last to February 21. This article briefly reviews what the author describes as "a fine example of international co-operation."

On the Noumea waterfront. Mr. H. van Pel (centre), fisheries officer to the South Pacific Commission and Director of the Fisheries Course, discusses local fishing techniques with M. Garcia (extreme right), skipper of the fishing boat in the background, while Fisheries Course students listen with interest.



NOW that the Fisheries Training Course has closed, it seems an appropriate time to review its worth and to consider if the aims of the Course have been achieved.

The purpose of the Course was to train selected men in the basic knowledge of fisheries and related skills. Such men are needed in nearly every territory in the South Pacific region for the development of fisheries.

Twenty-four trainees followed the complete Course from November 19, 1956, to February 21, 1957, and five observers attended for various subjects. One student, because of illness, could not complete the last part of the Course.

The trainees came from the following territories: Papua and New Guinea, 5; New Caledonia and Dependencies and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, 3 each; Netherlands New Guinea, American Samoa, British Solomon Islands Protectorate, Cook Islands, 2 each; Western Samoa, French Oceania, New Hebrides, Niue, Guam and the Kingdom of Tonga, 1 each. The observers came from New Caledonia, Papua and New Guinea (two each) and from the New Hebrides (one).

Eleven lecturers took part, including the Director, Mr. H. van Pel, and the co-director, Mr. P. Lusyne. Both the Director and the co-Director were employed for the full time of the Course. The total time of lectures, both in class and in the field, was 373 hours, made up as follows:

1. Knowledge of fish and their behaviour .....	21	hours
2. Elementary knowledge of the sea .....	11	"
3. Fishing gear .....	78	"
4. Fishing operations .....	111	"

5. Handling, transport and marketing .....	10	hours
6. Fish processing .....	12	"
7. Fish culture .....	37	"
8. Conservation and protection .....	18	"
9. Fishing craft .....	53	"
10. Problems of management .....	22	"
	373	"

The lectures were given simultaneously in English and in French. Many field trips were made and also four trips in the fisheries research vessel *Orsom III*, belonging to the French Institute of Oceania.

This is the first time that a training course has been held for South Pacific islanders, coming from various territories, and the results of this Course have been very satisfactory indeed. This is certainly for the major part due to the intelligence, diligence and lively interest of the participants, who proved to be highly suitable to this type of education. We have reason to expect that these trained men will be of real value to their home territories. However, only the future can show if our high expectations will materialize.

In this respect, it is certainly encouraging that some proof of the value of the Course has already come to light. The two trainees from the British Solomon Islands Protectorate successfully introduced *Tilapia mossambica* on their arrival back in the Solomons. Furthermore, a scientist in the United States of

America is seeking contact with our ex-students with a view to collecting information on the occurrence and movements of specific fish species. Most of the trainees have, or will get, jobs with local fisheries services, and we are quite confident that they will serve well their home islands and island groups.

The South Pacific Fisheries Training Course has been a fine example of international co-operation. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the French Institute of Oceania, the French Government and the South Pacific Commission staff all worked together in perfect harmony to obtain the high standard of efficiency of this Training Course.

### Fish Drive on Palmerston Atoll

Contributed by Ronald Powell,  
Cook Islands

During a recent visit to Palmerston Atoll we were able to sail across the lagoon and take part in a fish drive. The only gear used was a long scare-line, made by splitting and twisting coconut fronds together. This was dragged across the shallow water on the reef.

This simple method of fishing is commonly practised on this atoll, and yields catches of up to half a ton in one haul. The gear costs nothing, is easily replaced and is well suited to this reef. In the short time we had available, one haul yielded about one hundred fish weighing from 1-1½ pounds each.