

SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

NINETEENTH REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING ON FISHERIES

(Noumea, New Caledonia, 3-7 August 1987)

RESTRUCTURING OF THE SPC FISHERIES PROGRAMMES

(Paper submitted by the delegation of the Kingdom of Tonga)

1. PROPOSAL TITLE : Restructuring of the SPC Fisheries Programmes.

2. OBJECTIVE :

To review and restructure the SPC fisheries programmes to ensure:

- effective execution of all fisheries programmes;
- better understanding and appreciation of needs of member governments by the Commission;
- better appreciation by member governments and outside interests of the results of the SPC work programme;
- effective and closer working relationships between SPC fisheries programmes staff and member government's fisheries administrations;
- effective transmission and interpretation of results and needs of the fisheries programmes to member government leaders;
- effective communication between the fisheries programmes staff and financial donor governments and agencies; and
- effective and closer working relationships between the fisheries programmes staff and the regional fisheries organisations, Forum Fisheries Agency in particular.

3. BACKGROUND

- SPC island states attach considerable importance to fisheries resources in their respective fishery waters.
- Island governments fisheries administrations, in the past decade, have placed development emphasis on economic development of their fisheries resources, and development of manpower needs.
- Island governments have created/established a specialised fisheries regional organisation, the Forum Fisheries Agency, fisheries training institutions as a result of increased development of interests on fisheries resources economic development.
- SPC member governments expanded the fisheries involvement of SPC by establishing a programme to carry out biological research on tuna, expanded the activities of the Coastal Fisheries project to include inshore fisheries research, short-term training, fish processing and marketing.
- Island governments emphasis the importance of research to obtain information necessary for fisheries resource management and conservation and have established inshore fisheries research units within both the SPC and FFA. Information services are also being considered for improvement.

- Multilateral fisheries treaties between certain Pacific island states and distant water fishing nations are being negotiated.
- Financial assistance made available to fisheries related activities in the SPC region have increased in proportion to the increase in the number of financial aid donor agencies present in and outside the region.
- Pacific island states place great importance on proper co-ordination of fisheries development, management, and conservation in the SPC region, resulting in directing greater efforts to regional activities.
- Member governments of regional fisheries institutions continuously make efforts to improve the efficiency of the work of the institutions fisheries work programmes.

4. PROBLEMS

- The institutional structure of the South Pacific Commission has remained the same or very much similar to that which existed during the period 1947-1961 when the Commission became involved in fisheries activities (refer WP.8). During this period, very little expression of interests on fisheries were made by SPC member governments.
- Fisheries activities in both countries and regional institutions have increased dramatically fast over the years and, accordingly the trend of thinking of member governments' administrations have changed, so as their needs for assistance have increased.
- The SPC fisheries programmes have not been able to keep up with the demands for assistance of member governments' fisheries administrations. Although attempts have been made to improve the performance of programme staff, difficulties are still being encountered due to the cumbersome nature of the administrative structure of the organisation as a whole which consequently affect the activities of the programmes. As a result, member governments are frustrated by the lack of acknowledgement of their needs and expectations by the programmes.
- This frustration, accumulated over a number of years, has lead to certain countries seeking alternative ways of meeting their needs. Consequently, tasks which duplicate the work of the SPC fisheries programmes have been assigned to other institutions (FFA for example).
- SPC fisheries staff are capable of carrying out their tasks and achieving the assigned goals, but are hindered from doing so by the administration system in which they work. As a result, much time and effort is spent on internal SPC politics which thus frustrate programme staff.
- The author, through observation over a number of years, finds the institutional structure of the Commission to be the main contributor to the problem concerned. The system was suitable when fisheries activities involvement was low. As the level of involvement increased the system had become more and more unsuitable and unresponsive to the demands of the work programme and member governments.
- The fisheries programmes at present stand as one discipline amongst the many Commission administers. As such, the programmes only carry verbal weights in regards to the administrative priorities of the Commission.

- The 19th RTMF has attempted to improve the situation by recommending the appointment of a Fisheries Co-ordinator to improve communication between member governments and the Commission and with the Commission. The author sees this as "beating a dead horse"; it only adds to the problem.

5. PROPOSAL

It is proposed to:

- review the organisation structure of the SPC with the aims of creating an autonomous fisheries section within the existing organisational structure of the Commission to administer the fisheries programmes.
- effect appointment of a Director of Fisheries Programmes. The Director position be made to assume the same administrative responsibilities as that of existing SPC Director of Programmes position, and be responsible directly to the SPC Secretary-General. The Director of Fisheries Programmes should be responsible for the overall administration of the fisheries programmes.
- effect appointment of a Fisheries Co-ordinator position. The Co-ordinator should be directly responsible to the Secretary-General through the Director of Fisheries Programmes. His role would be to liaise with fisheries projects and member governments and the Director. He also liaises between the programmes and regional fisheries organisations, and international organisations.
- operational heads of fisheries programmes should be given new titles as Chief Tuna Scientist, Chief Research Scientist, and Chief/Senior Fisheries Development Officer respectively.
- upgrade the Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries (RTMF) to a South Pacific Fisheries Committee and to have the same functions as those of the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA). The present functions of the RTMF should be reassigned to the Standing Committee, technical review working groups, workshops, technical groups (Fakahau and Shepard), albacore group meeting, and training courses. The SPC Fisheries Committee Meeting reports directly to the South Pacific Conference.

6. RECOMMENDATION

That the 19th RTMF consider the proposal as outlined and approve the following:

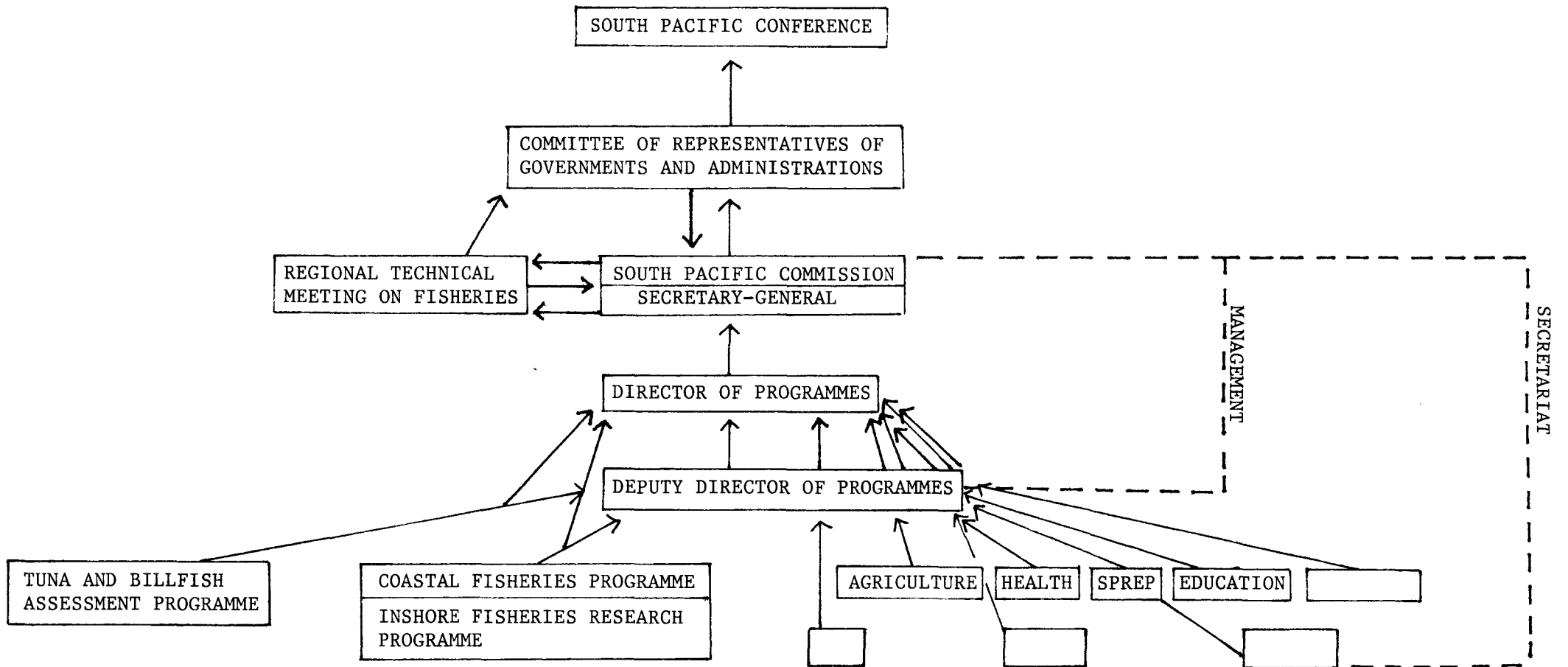
1. That the Secretariat submits the proposal (in the form agreed on by the 19th RTMF) to the CRGA for endorsement, and to the South Pacific Conference for consideration and approval.

7. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I. Existing structure of the SPC fisheries programmes within the SPC administrative structure.

Attachment II. Proposed administrative structure of the fisheries programmes.

EXISTING STRUCTURE OF THE SPC FISHERIES PROGRAMMES WITHIN THE SPC ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE



PROPOSED ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF FISHERIES PROGRAMMES

