

SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSIONTWELFTH REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING ON FISHERIES  
(Noumea, New Caledonia, 17 - 21 November 1980)SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION  
IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF FISHERIES (OTHER THAN SKIPJACK)  
FROM DECEMBER 1979 TO NOVEMBER 1980

The South Pacific Commission's Work Programme in marine resources falls under six main headings :

1. Assessment of resources and fishing techniques
2. Management and conservation
3. Processing of fisheries products
4. Awards for applied research and training
5. Short-term consultancies
6. Collection and dissemination of information

1. ASSESSMENT OF RESOURCES AND FISHING TECHNIQUESThe Skipjack Survey and Assessment Programme  
(see separate Working Paper)The Deep Sea Fisheries Development Project

Since the Eleventh Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries (December 1979), the Deep Sea Fisheries Development Project has operated as follows :

<u>Place</u>	<u>Fisherman</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Palau	P. Taumaia	1/11/79 - 31/1/80
Fiji	P. Mead	( 8/11/79 - 13/12/79 & ( 13/3/80 - 31/8/80
Truk	P. Taumaia	1/2/80 - 31/3/80
Wallis & Futuna	T. Fusimalohi	13/2/80 - 2/7/80
Kiribati	P. Taumaia	23/4/80 - 19/11/80
Vanuatu	T. Fusimalohi	12/8/80 - (continuing)
Tonga	P. Mead	13/9/80 - (continuing)
Tuvalu	P. Taumaia	19/11/80- (continuing)

Fishing operations concentrated on deep bottom dropline fishing on the outer reef slopes but trolling was carried out at times. Total catches and catch rates for bottom fishing for the countries where the data have been analysed were : Palau 1,975 kg, 3.3 kg/reel/fishing hour, Truk 2,116 kg, 4.1 kg/reel/fishing hour, Wallis and Futuna 3,620 kg, 9.3 kg/reel/fishing hour.

In each country visited, local fishermen received on-the-job training in the techniques of deep bottom fishing.

## 2. MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION

### Workshop on Tropical Rock Lobsters

This workshop, which was to have been held following the present meeting, has been postponed.

## 3. PROCESSING OF FISHERIES PRODUCTS

### Training courses in bêche-de-mer processing

Applications were invited (Savingram N°1 of 2 January 1980) for sponsorship for training in bêche-de-mer processing, but no requests were received this year.

## 4. AWARDS FOR APPLIED RESEARCH AND TRAINING

### Research on bêche-de-mer

Bêche-de-mer consultant Mr Mark Gentle completed his study of the biology and ecology of commercial bêche-de-mer species in Fiji on 31 July this year. This project commenced on 1 August 1978 and was carried out in collaboration with the Fiji Fisheries Division whose assistance is gratefully acknowledged. A report on the project is now in preparation and a handbook on bêche-de-mer has already been produced.

In May 1980, Mr Gentle visited Tonga for three weeks in order to assess the potential for establishing a bêche-de-mer fishery. As a result, a small bêche-de-mer fishery is now in operation in Tonga.

### Research on demersal fish communities

Funding has been granted for research by the Papua New Guinea University of Technology on the ecology of demersal fish communities.

### Fishing cadet course in New Zealand

Eleven Pacific Islanders (1 from the Cook Islands, 2 from Fiji, 2 from Kiribati, 4 from Solomon Islands, 1 from Tonga and 1 from Tuvalu) were sponsored to attend this 16 week course at Nelson Polytechnic from February to June 1980. All students successfully completed the course. Grants towards the cost of the course were made by the Commonwealth Foundation and the Government of New Zealand.

### International Study Visits

Mr T. Tikai, a fisheries officer from Kiribati, undertook an SPC-sponsored study visit to Western Samoa, Tonga and Fiji for ten days in April/May to study boat building schemes.

## 5. SHORT TERM CONSULTANCIES

Mr Michael Rivkin spent two months working with the Skipjack Programme Coordinator on the economic assessment of aquaculture as an alternative source of live bait for skipjack fisheries development.

Funds were set aside under the 1980 budget for a conchologist (Mr Parkinson of Papua New Guinea) to spend three weeks in Fiji to investigate the feasibility of establishing small scale industries in valuable seashell collecting and exporting.

Funds were also set aside for a master fisherman from Tonga to visit the Cook Islands for three weeks to set up the Cook Islands Government fishing vessel for long-line fishing for tuna.

#### 6. COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

Because of a considerable backlog in the Commission's small offset printery, a number of fisheries publications are awaiting printing. Publications issued since the last Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries, and those in press, are listed below.

##### SPC Fisheries Newsletter

Three issues have been printed since the last meeting.

##### Occasional Paper

Occasional Paper 17, which deals with SPC's deep bottom fishing programmes is in press.

##### Deep Sea Fisheries Development Project Reports

Reports have been issued on the Deep Sea Fisheries Development Project's operations in Kosrae, New Caledonia and Tonga (second visit by the Project). Those on Kosrae and Tonga are available in English only; that on New Caledonia has been issued in French and the English edition is in press.

Reports on Wallis and Futuna (French), and on Niue, Palau, Truk, Yap and West New Britain (all in English) are in press.

##### Bibliography of Fisheries Publications

A bilingual Select Bibliography of South Pacific Commission Fisheries Publications has been issued.

##### Handbooks

Bêche-de-mer of the Tropical Pacific has been printed and distributed in English and French and, at the time of writing, the English edition of A Handbook for Lobster Fishermen of the Tropical Pacific Islands was in press; funds for printing it were made available by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation.

##### Fisheries Directory of the South Pacific Commission Region

This directory has proved extremely useful both for planners interested in assessing the state of development of fisheries in the region and for individuals and organisations interested in investing in the fishing industry in the region. It is planned to produce a second edition of this publication in 1981, and, as a first step, a circular letter asking for updated information has already been sent to Fisheries Officers throughout the region.

Information Services

As in previous years, a major aspect of the SPC fisheries activities has continued to be the answering of requests for information on any aspect of tropical fisheries from government and private individuals.

---

APPENDIX I

DUTY TRIPS OF FISHERIES ADVISER AND FISHERIES ASSISTANT

(since last Fisheries Meeting)

Fisheries Adviser (René Grandperrin)

Wallis (13/2 - 23/2/80)	To set up the Deep Sea Fisheries Development Project
Suva, Fiji (9/3 - 15/3/80)	For discussions on the Deep Sea Fisheries Development Project and bêche-de-mer research
Osaka, Japan (17/5 - 1/6/80)	To attend the 19th Session of the Indo-Pacific Fishery Commission and a Symposium on the Development of Small Scale Fisheries
Vila (12/7 - 14/7/80)	To set up the Deep Sea Fisheries Development Project

(Dr Grandperrin left the South Pacific Commission at the termination of his contract on 31/8/80).

Fisheries Assistant (James Crossland)

No duty trips since last Fisheries Meeting.

(Mr Crossland left the South Pacific Commission at the termination of his contract on 28/4/80).

Assistant Fisheries Officer (Mark Gentle)

(Mr Gentle commenced duties on 1/8/80).

Suva, Fiji (1/8 - 8/8/80)	Complete final report for bêche-de-mer project.
---------------------------	---

---

APPENDIX IIRECOMMENDATIONS ON THE ELEVENTH REGIONAL TECHNICAL  
MEETING ON FISHERIESBêche-de-merRecommendation No.1

The meeting recommended that a detailed survey of marketing opportunities available to South Pacific territories for their production of bêche-de-mer should be carried out by a marketing specialist having proven experience of marine products on South East Asian markets.

Emphasis should be put on precise information on quality requirements in buyer countries and possibilities of advanced processing enabling territories to derive greater profits from this product.

As a follow-up to this survey it is recommended that information be obtained and communicated to South Pacific territories on a continued basis covering current demand, prices, shipping and grading requirements not only for bêche-de-mer but also for other marine products such as shark fins, trochus meat etc. as required by the territories.

Action taken

In response to this direction, a questionnaire was circulated to seafood dealers in Hong Kong and Singapore, and the responses to this questionnaire have been incorporated in an article about dried seafoods which will appear in the next Fisheries Newsletter.

In addition, SPC has liaised with the Food and Agriculture Organization in order to examine the possibility of expanding the scope of the proposed FAO/Norway Co-operative Programme project "Marketing Information and Advisory Service for Fish Products in the Asian Region" to include interested countries in the Pacific Islands. The South Pacific Commission will continue to co-operate closely with the Advisory Service in order to facilitate the dissemination of information to members.

Information servicesRecommendation No.2

The meeting recommended that the South Pacific Commission include within information services a periodic annotated list of technical fisheries films suitable for pre and post-harvest development, extension and training aspects of fisheries development within the region.

### Action taken

Further to this recommendation, SPC contacted FAO and the Department of Primary Industry in Australia. From the information supplied by these organisations we selected about a dozen films relevant to the region, the synopses of which are given in Fisheries Newsletter No.21 as well as information about how to buy or borrow the films.

### Seminar sessions

#### Research on deep bottom fishes

##### Recommendation No.3

The meeting recommended that SPC consider a comprehensive programme to study the effects of the development of fishing on deep water bottom fish resources. It is suggested that this programme be based in one territory so that sufficient data can be collected to determine possible changes in the resources as a result of increased fishing effort. Such information is to be made available to member countries. The meeting also recommended that the SPC encourage other countries within the region to collect statistics on their deep bottom fisheries.

### Action taken

A project to evaluate the impact of expanding handling fisheries on deep bottom fish resources in the region has been identified and approved with funding to be sought from extra-budgetary sources. The project is scheduled to begin in September 1981.

### Aquaculture

#### Recommendation No.4

The meeting recommended that SPC try to stimulate co-operation between Pacific countries on aquacultural matters. These should include:

- (1) Arranging training of personnel
- (2) Distribution of desirable species
- (3) Supply of fry, larvae and spat by existing hatcheries on preliminary or experimental scale and in future on commercial scale and basis
- (4) Providing for free flow of information and knowledge, and co-operation with the organisations involved in tropical island aquaculture like FAO/UNDP, CNEXO, etc.

### Action taken

The SPC has continued to facilitate the interchange of aquaculture information and expertise throughout the region. The facility exists for rapid response to requests from individual countries for assistance in this field through short-term expert and specialist services as well as study visits.

---