

SOUTH PACIFIC ISLANDS FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

PROPOSED SUB-PROJECT

- 1) Title: Rock Lobster (Crayfish) Exploitation and Management
- 2) Background and Justification:

The Report by Dr Ray George, Consultant on Rock Lobster (Crayfish) emphasises that the stocks of Rock Lobster are low by comparison with those of Australia or South Africa or New Zealand. The properly processed product commands a high price at local markets (mainly tourist centres). The main stock of South Pacific Rock Lobster is based on one widespread species which is difficult to catch because it lives in rough surf conditions. In Territories where these conditions predominate, the stocks are probably underexploited whereas on the heavily populated, high islands, stocks are naturally lower, overfishing is suspected. Fisheries in various stages of development exist in Tonga, British Solomons, New Guinea, Fiji and French Polynesia.

Dr George's report arose from his studies in the territories of Fiji, Western Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga, Papua and New Guinea, British Solomon Islands Protectorate, New Hebrides Condominium, Cook Islands and French Polynesia during the period 19 October 1970 to 18 April 1971.

The consolidated recommendations, i.e. those having more or less general applicability, propose that action be taken at Government level, for both private enterprise and government services to encourage fuller development of all aspects of the industry particularly in the methods of processing and transport; to review and revise, and where necessary, introduce appropriate regulatory measures to ensure top quality products, develop a catch-recording system and such other management and control measures as may be appropriate.

- 3) Objectives:
 - a) to advise Governments in the testing of the rock lobster resource through encouragement of fishermen, private enterprise and government services.
 - b) to advise Governments on the development, improvement and operation of transport from the fishing area to centre of consumption.
 - c) to advise and assist Governments in the design and application of catch recording systems to permit adequate surveillance of the fishery and the effect of the fishery on the stock.

- d) to advise and assist Governments on the promulgation and application of management and control measures appropriate to the rational utilization of Rock Lobster resources.

4) Work Plan and Schedules:

Depending on the period of availability of the expert the programme would include visits of longer or shorter duration depending on the specific territory requirement, to as many as possible of those territories indicating their interest in such "follow-up" visits.

Detailed schedules can only be worked out when the interest of Governments has been determined and the period of availability of the Consultant ascertained.

5) Government Counterpart Support:

Interest and co-operation demonstrated during the original sub-project would seem to ensure adequate support.

6) Expert:

- a) Dr Ray W. George, Senior Curator,
Western Australian Museum, Perth, Western Australia.
- b) Qualifications: as in original Post Vacancy Announcement.
- c) Duration: desirably 3 months.

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