

SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

TWENTY FIRST REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING ON FISHERIES  
(Noumea, New Caledonia, 7-11 August 1989)

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS ON THE WESTERN PACIFIC FISHERIES  
CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

1. Agreed Terms of Reference
2. WPFCC Directors' Report to PECC Fisheries Task Force Workshop  
Vancouver, Canada  
29-30 May 1989

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AGREED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AND STRUCTURE  
OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC FISHERIES CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

I. NATURE

At this initial stage, the WPFCC should be seen as a non-governmental body characterized by simplicity and informality. If in time the WPFCC becomes more formal and structured, this must come about through a process of evolution.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the WPFCC shall be to foster cooperation in the area of fisheries between Southeast Asia and the South Pacific.

III MEMBERSHIP

- (a) All interested countries of the ASEAN region; and
- (b) All interested sovereign Pacific Island Nations and all interested regional Pacific Island institutions and bodies having a significant involvement in fisheries.

IV. FUNCTIONS

In attempting to facilitate fisheries co-operation between Southeast Asia and the South Pacific, the WPFCC shall:

- 1. Respond to requests from members; and
- 2. Use its own initiative where it perceives that a clear opportunity to foster such co-operation exists.

In responding to a request or following its own initiative, the WPFCC shall establish a task oriented sub-committee to address the opportunity.

In fostering fisheries cooperation between Southeast Asia and the South Pacific, the WPFCC shall, where it deems it to be appropriate, collaborate with existing non-member bodies in the Region. The WPFCC shall avoid duplicating the activities of such bodies.

V. STRUCTURE

The WPFCC shall have a Chairman, a Director and a Secretariat to carry out the administrative work of the WPFCC. The Secretariat shall be managed by the Director.

The Chairman shall be elected by the WPFCC members and shall serve from one WPFCC meeting to the next. That is to say, the Chairman shall have a term of not longer than 18 months and not shorter than 12 months.

The Director shall be appointed by the country hosted the Secretariat, with the consent and approval of the WPFCC members. The term of the Director shall be three years, subject to renewal.

If the Director is an ASEAN representative, then the Chairman must be a Pacific Island representative, and vice-versa.

All members of the WPFCC shall have the right to be represented at WPFCC meetings.

The WPFCC shall meet not less than once every 18 months and not more than once every 12 months. At any given meeting, the WPFCC shall review its progress to date and

shall discuss plans for the coming period. Since the purpose of the WPFCC is to promote cooperation, decisions shall be arrived at by consensus.

#### VI. SECRETARIAT

The Secretariat shall acquire a staff which the Director deems to be adequate to carry out the administrative burdens imposed upon the Secretariat.

The Secretariat shall initially be located in Manila and shall be organised in that initial stage by the Philippine Pacific Economic Cooperation in cooperation with the Philippine Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR). Until such time that the Philippine Department of Agriculture provides the Secretariat with office facilities, the office of the PECC shall serve as the interim office of the Secretariat.

While the Secretariat shall be located initially in the Philippines, the Secretariat can be rotated among the other WPFCC member-countries if and when the WPFCC deems such rotation to be appropriate and desirable.

#### VII. CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

The individual member countries shall identify the appropriate agency that shall serve as the national contact point for communication and exchange of information between them and the WPFCC Secretariat.

#### VIII. FUNDING

The funding of all normal local administrative and operating costs of the Secretariat shall be the responsibility of the host country.

Other costs of the WPFCC activities are to be covered by external funding.

#### IX. OBSERVERS AND ADVISERS

The WPFCC shall invite participation by observers from non-members. In the interest of further promoting Pacific tri-regional cooperation, special observer status will be observed to the Pacific coast countries of Latin America and their relevant regional organisations.

The Chairman of the Director may from time to time obtain the services of advisers. If the Chairman or Director obtains the services of advisers. If the Chairman or Director obtains the services of an adviser, the WPFCC members must be promptly informed. If any member objects, the Chairman or Director shall terminate the services of the adviser forthwith.

#### X. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PECC

The WPFCC intends to maintain friendly and cooperative relations with the PECC.

Manila, Philippines  
16 December 1988

THE WESTERN PACIFIC FISHERIES CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE:  
PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE <sup>1/</sup>

by

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1. ORIGINS

The beginnings of the Western Pacific Fisheries Consultative Committee (WPFCC) could be traced back to the CIDA-financed and PECC Fisheries Task Force-organized study tour of the major ASEAN fishing nations by a group of senior fisheries officials from the Pacific Island Nations (PINs) in February 1986. In one of the group's meetings with officials of the Philippine Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), it was suggested that thought be given to the establishment of a consultative committee open to the PINs and all interested ASEAN countries, which shall serve as a vehicle for promoting expanded fisheries collaboration between the PINs and the ASEAN.

At the ASEAN-PINs International Fisheries Conference held in Manila in October 1987, participants from the ASEAN and Pacific Island Nations supported the Indonesian proposal calling for a forum on inter-regional cooperation to facilitate the operationalization of collaboration in fisheries development and management in areas of mutual interest to the developing coastal states of the ASEAN and the Pacific Islands.

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<sup>1/</sup> Discussion paper prepared for the PECC Fisheries Task Force Workshop, Vancouver, Canada, 29-30 May 1989.

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The Philippine Pacific Economic Cooperation Committee (PPECC) then suggested that the forum take the form of a small, informal coordinating body - the WPFCC - which could be run as initially experimental and terminated if it is proven that fisheries cooperation between the ASEAN and PINs could adequately develop even without it. The PPECC, with the assistance of the PECC Fisheries Task Force Coordinator, Dr. Gordon R. Munro, acting upon instructions from the Manila Conference participants, subsequently prepared a working document detailing the objectives, organization, and mechanism of the WPFCC, for circulation to and comments by the ASEAN and PI countries represented at the Meeting.

The proposed WPFCC Terms of Reference gained the approval of the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and the ASEAN, and of the Sixth PECC in Osaka, Japan in May 1988 - after the reiteration by Philippine Agriculture Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez of the Philippine Government's commitment to the WPFCC.

On 15-17 December 1988, the WPFCC was formally inaugurated in Manila by Secretary Carlos G. Dominguez of the Philippine Department of Agriculture, with representatives from four ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand), seven PINs (Cook Islands, Fiji, FSM, Marshall Islands, Palau, PNG, and Solomon Islands), five regional organizations (Forum Fisheries Agency and South Pacific Commission, OLDEPESCA, CPPS, and PECC), and four Pacific Latin American countries (Chile, Columbia, Mexico, and Peru).

At the Inaugural Meeting, the Terms of Reference that shall govern its operations, were adopted and its two key officials were elected: Mr. Barney Rongap of PNG as Chairman and Ms. Elvira A. Baluyut of the Philippines as Director.

The Philippine Government has provided funds to cover the normal administrative costs of the WPFCC Secretariat and CIDA has generally granted close to half a million Canadian dollars to support its initial three years of operation.

## 2. PROGRESS TO DATE

As a first activity since its formal establishment, the WPFCC Secretariat organized the WPFCC Tuna Research Workshop last 3-6 April 1989 in Manila and General Santos City with participants from the four ASEAN member countries, five PINs (Fiji, FSM, PNG, Solomon Islands, and Tonga), and three regional organizations [SPC, PECC, and the FAO Indo-Pacific Tuna Development and Management Program (IPTP)].

The Workshop, which marked the commencement of the WPFCC's varied tasks in fostering fisheries collaboration between and among the ASEAN and PINs, was adjudged a success by the participants on account of its having drawn up a concrete program of practical measures which could improve ASEAN-PIN cooperation in tuna research, the most important of which was the establishment of a WPFCC Working Group on Tuna Research with the core to be composed of the WPFCC Director and key contacts in the ASEAN and PINs.

## 3. FUTURE PLANS

In the next several years, the WPFCC Secretariat shall have its agenda full with activities that have been suggested for implementation either at the 1987 Manila Conference, the 1988 WPFCC Inaugural Meeting, or the 1989 Tuna Research Workshop.

These activities, meant to promote or strengthen fisheries inter-regional cooperation between the ASEAN and PINs, include the following:

- 3.1 Study tour of the PINs by a group of senior ASEAN fisheries officials, tentatively programmed for early 1990.
- 3.2 Publication of a quarterly Tuna Research Newsletter for distribution in the ASEAN and PIN regions.

- 3.3 Organization and funding of participation of tuna researchers in scientific/technical meetings in the two regions. For example, WPFCC has committed to finance the participation of one senior researcher from each of the four ASEAN member countries in the forthcoming meeting of the SPC Technical Standing Committee on Tuna and Billfish in Fiji in June 1989, and of PIN representatives to the IPTP Tuna Meeting in Bali, Indonesia in August 1989.
- 3.4 Exchange of scientists between the two regions, specifically in tuna tagging activities. Plans are afoot for a Filipino team of tuna researchers to join a tuna tagging voyage of the SPC Tuna Research vessel in the Philippines.
- 3.5 Sharing of computer software for analysis of tuna tagging data and of tuna catch and effort data between the two regions.
- 3.6 Organization of a consultative meeting on fisheries education and training in the ASEAN and PINs.
- 3.7 Holding of the next WPFCC Annual Meeting in PNG in mid-1990 and of another Tuna Research Workshop on or about June 1992.

In addition, the WPFCC Secretariat hopes to be able to assist the PECC Fisheries Task Force in actualizing tri-regional collaboration among the ASEAN - Pacific Islands - Pacific Latin American countries - as proposed at the Pacific Latin America - PINs International Fisheries Conference in Lima, Peru in September 1988.

4. CONCLUSION

The PECC Task Force on Fisheries Development and Cooperation could pride itself in the fact that the WPFCC, which was established largely through the initiatives of its Coordinator, has already made substantial progress in the few months that it has been in existence. It is particularly noteworthy that WPFCC has financial backing from the Canadian Government, through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the full support of governments of the ASEAN and the PINs as well as of the two major regional organizations in the Pacific - the FFA and the SPC - and of the PECC whose Fisheries Task Force Coordinator has been invited to serve as WPFCC Adviser. One can not therefore help but feel highly confident that the WPFCC would be able to attain its goals and move from the realm of pure rhetoric to that of concrete, action-oriented work plans and programs.