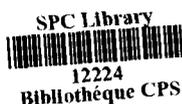


## FISHERIES IN FRENCH POLYNESIA

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Note: A glossary of terms has been annexed to this paper.

### INTRODUCTION:

French Polynesian fisheries can be divided in two main categories:

1. **Offshore oceanic fisheries:**
  - 1.1 Foreign-based fleets (Korea)
  - 1.2 Domestic fisheries
2. **Nearshore oceanic fisheries:**
  - 2.1 Skipjack/longliners, which use both longlines and poles-and-lines;
  - 2.2 Traditional skipjack boats which use both poles-and-lines or troll lines
  - 2.3 *Poti-mararas* which engage in bottom-fishing and trolling and use harpoons for mahi-mahi.

The criteria used to differentiate between the two types of fisheries are distance to fishing grounds (usually over 50 nautical miles from the home port) and the fishing capacity of the vessels.

### The fleet:

#### **Foreign offshore oceanic fisheries (Korea):**

The maximum authorized number of vessels is 65. In 1995, a total of 55 ships operated in the French Polynesia's exclusive economic zone (EEZ), with widely varying results.

#### **Domestic offshore oceanic fisheries:**

This fleet includes 43 vessels, 38 boats (from 13 to 20 metres in length) of which fish mainly for tuna which are then chilled, while the other five are 25 m freezer tuna boats.

#### **Nearshore oceanic fisheries:**

There are 30 skipjack-longliners. There are no exact figures for traditional skipjack boats, but their numbers are estimated at between 80 and 85. Given the wide geographic area covered by French Polynesia, it is virtually impossible to know precisely how many *poti-mararas* there are, although an overall estimate can be placed at about 250 boats.

### Production:

For the period covered by the access agreement signed with Korea, i.e. from October 1994 to September 1995, catches registered by the Korean fleet and verified by our Division reached 2206 mt, including 2000 mt of tuna (including 1340 m of bigeye tuna).

Nominal catches (all species) for domestic offshore fisheries reached 2500 mt, including 2100 mt of marketable species, including 1000 mt (50 %) of tuna and 500 mt of billfish (25%).

As for nearshore oceanic fisheries, production reached a total of 2000 mt, including 1000 mt of skipjack (50%) and 500 mt of tuna.

### **Statistics:**

#### **Data Collection:**

Data for the Korean fleet are provided directly by their boats. In the form of a fishing notice, each time they enter the EEZ. The vessels are equipped with the ARGOS monitoring system, which allows the data provided to be verified.

Data from the domestic fleet are collected by officers of the services involved in the following manner:

- for longliners, logs are collected by the captain or vessel owners. Verification is conducted at offloading;
- for other types of fishing vessels, daily surveys are made with fishermen, who, in general, are reluctant to fill out the survey forms.

#### **Data Processing:**

After the data have been verified and validated, they are used for the production of two specifically designed-publications. The first, a simple compilation of the data collected, is entitled "Maritime Sector Bulletin" and is intended for the general public; the second publication, entitled "Longline Fishing in 1994" is designed for commercial fishermen and gives research-oriented scientific information. Both publications have been sent to the SPC and can be consulted there.

#### **Coverage:**

For the fishing by the Korean fleet, coverage is 95%. For the domestic fleet, offshore coverage is 80%, while for nearshore oceanic fisheries, it is 30%. Priority has been given to efforts currently underway to improve coverage for nearshore oceanic fisheries.

### **Research:**

Given developments in French Polynesia's distant waters fisheries, authorities have implemented, in co-operation with ORSTOM (French Institute of Research for Development in Co-operation) and IFREMER (French Institute for Research into the Exploitation of the Sea), a research programme whose main goal is to provide responses to the three major questions raised by fishermen, i.e. where, when and how resources can be best exploited. The programme also pursues more basic scientific objectives such as a study of the aetiology of sub-surface tuna within French Polynesia's EEZ.

This programme, called ECOTAPP (Study of Tuna Behaviour through Acoustics and Longline Fishing), is scheduled to last three years and began its first phase in June 1995. The total cost of the project will be 442 million CFP francs.

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### **APPENDIX 1**

- SKIPJACK BOAT:** Wooden vessel, 9 to 12 metres in length, equipped with a very powerful diesel motor (more than 350 HP).
- SKIPJACK/LOGLINER:** Skipjack boat equipped with longlines.
- POTI-MARARA:** Wooden or fibreglass vessel, 6 to 8 metres in length, equipped with an in-board or out-board motor. The specially-designed steering set-up of this vessel allows an individual to net flying fish (marara) while piloting the boat.
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