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COUNTRY STATEMENT

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

## INTRODUCTION

The Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources was established in December, 1986 to administer Papua New Guinea (PNG) legislation concerning the marine and aquatic resources of the country. Fisheries is a concurrent function under the Organic law on Provincial Government. Consequently, the Department assists Provincial Governments in the implementation of their own legislations. The 3 main objectives of the Department are to:

- (a) increase the national fishing effort through utilisation of exploitable fisheries and aquatic resources to achieve optimum social and financial returns;
- (b) increase the participation of nationals at all levels of fisheries development and related activities;
- (c) efficiently manage the development of fisheries and other aquatic resources.

The Department consists of 3 divisions: Research, Economics and Marketing; Resource Development and Enforcement and Management Services. Branches in the structure under these divisions cater for Research, Economics, Marketing, Resource Development, Inspection and Surveillance, Policy Coordination and Implementation, Licensing, Education and Training and Administration. As an Economic Department, its operations are organised into Public Investment Programmes and support programmes of recurrent activities.

## PROGRAMMES

### Provincial Liaison

The Department recognises that some fisheries functions are concurrent and therefore provincial liaison and consultation in project planning and implementation is essential. As a result of this liaison, a number of projects have been established in the provinces on a joint basis. The establishment of a Fisheries Extension Section within the Department provides close liaison with provinces to ensure effective extension services and information dissemination.

This programme is constrained at present by the lack of formal linkages between the Provincial Fisheries Extension Units and the Department, a lack of competent manpower and a lack of consultation by some provinces regarding project formulation. To overcome these constraints, the provincial fisheries extension services will be strengthened through the smallholder coastal fisheries programme. The programme will be jointly managed to encourage increased smallholder participation.

### Industrial Fisheries

The 3 main industrial fisheries in PNG are for tuna, penaid prawns and tropical rock lobster. Currently prawns represent the biggest foreign exchange earner in terms of export earnings. In 1987, prawn exports totalled 1,468 tonnes worth K9.3 million, while lobster exports totalled 55.5 tonnes

worth K0.84 million. Due to the absence of a domestic tuna fleet, no tuna exports were recorded. Tuna exports have been of considerable value in previous years

Though there is extensive foreign participation in the prawn industry, all joint venture proposals are screened by the Department. A major constraint relates to the lack of marketing information and expertise to assess marketing arrangements and monitor transfer pricing. A marketing unit has been proposed under the Departmental structure to address this problem.

### International Liaison

#### Torres Strait Treaty

The Torres Strait Treaty between Australia and Papua New Guinea was signed in 1978 and ratified in February, 1985. With respect to fisheries, the Treaty provides for joint management of designated fisheries including lobster, prawns, pearl shells, spanish mackerel and turtle. PNG benefits from the Treaty through the establishment of the Fisheries Jurisdiction Line that establishes areas of jurisdiction over fisheries activities for each country. The major fishery in the area as far as PNG is concerned is the lobster fishery which employs over 1,000 divers and produces up to 70 tonnes of lobster with a market value of approximately K1 million. PNG has been allocated a 300 tonne prawn quota but there has been no participation by PNG in this fishery to date.

A number of initiatives have been taken to accelerate the development of fisheries in Torres Strait. A National company has been granted 4 licences to fish for prawns in the Torres Strait Protected Zone. Procedures for handling vessels holding dual licences have been agreed to between PNG and Australia, thus clearing the way for Australian vessels to fish for PNG companies in Torres Strait. A management plan for the lobster fishery is being drawn up including proposals to zone areas for various fishing types; e.g. freezer boats, dinghys, hookah gear, so as to prevent freezer boats and hookah gear dominating the fishery.

A major problem hindering the development of Torres Strait fisheries is the lack of infrastructural and administrative support. To overcome this, the Department is participating with the Western Province Provincial Government in a project to supply ice and ice boxes to village fishermen and upgrade extension. The project will cost K200,000 and funding will be provided over 5 years. The emphasis of the project will be to upgrade the product quality to ensure prices and reputation on the world market can be maintained. A draft lobster management plan will be finalised for implementation in 1989.

### Involvement in SPC Work Programmes

The Department has maintained active involvement in many of the projects of SPC's work programme, and intends doing so in the future. The branches in the Department most involved in the projects are the Resource Development and Research

and Survey Branches,

### Fisheries Sector Review

A major survey of the fisheries sector in PNG is currently being undertaken by a team of experts. The survey is being funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The survey involves 14 man-months over a 3 month period, ending in September, 1989. Each of the experts has been allocated a counterpart from within the Department to assist in liaison with outside organisations.

The fundamental purpose of the survey is to perform the following tasks:

- (i) review the current status of the fisheries of PNG, and the industry and community fishing operations currently exploiting them, with particular reference to resource, economic, employment and sociological aspects;
- (ii) assess the developmental and growth options available to PNG, its fishing industry and its people, and in conjunction with the Department, rank development priorities taking into account
  - a. practicality
  - b. economic feasibility
  - c. the extent to which they will or can meet the social expectations of those who will be involved in these developments,
  - d. the constraints which will need to be overcome and the assistance which will need to be provided to successfully develop such opportunities;
- (iii) review the resources available to the Department and consider the means of strengthening its ability to meet its present obligations;
- (iv) in the light of (iii) above, consider the additional needs of the Department to allow it to fulfill effectively its role in planning for, and subsequently implementing, future fisheries developments;
- (v) to recommend the further steps which will be required to prepare a detailed and long-term Fisheries Development Plan, and to ensure its subsequent implementation.

### Coastal Fisheries Development

Projects undertaken under the Programme include;

- (i) Ongoing operations of Provincial Fishing Authorities including Kupiano, Oro Bay, West New Britain and Manus.
- (ii) Ongoing operations of International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Artisanal Fisheries Projects at Baimuru and Samarai.
- (iii) Fisheries Extension and Training Centres in Port Moresby, Oro Bay and Manus
- (iv) Local Coastal Fisheries Support for Provincial Fisheries Projects which include;
  - a. Mendi, Southern Highlands Province - Trout Fisheries
  - b. Kerema, Gulf Province - Fish Marketing
  - c. Daru, Western Province - Fisheries Extension Support
  - d. Madang, Madang Province - Fisheries Extension and Marketing
  - e. Kokopo, East New Britain Province - Fisheries Development

- f. Lae, Morobe Province - Voco Point Fisheries and Marketing
- g. Wewak, East Sepik Province - Fisheries Extension Support
- (v) Provincial Extension and Liaison

Operations of the 4 Provincial Fisheries Projects and the Fishing Authorities will continue to be monitored with attention to facilitating improved production and marketing systems. The Samarai and Baimuru fish plants will continue with their scheduled works programmes. Fisheries Extension and Training Centres in Port Moresby and Manus have been established through financial assistance from UNDP. The project has initially concentrated on fishing craft development. Provincial Local Coastal Fisheries support in the provinces have received funding. Design of the Madang and Kokopo Fish Plants is nearing completion and building should start as soon as tenders are approved.

The principal difficulties facing these programmes are:

- (i) Low market landings due to;
  - a. motivational constraints associated with villages having conflicting social, economic and other obligations.
  - b. traditional inheritance of fishing rights and resource ownership.
  - c. poor weather conditions
  - d. lack of suitable fishing craft
  - e. limited skills to undertake a commercial enterprise
- (ii) Ineffective extension services due to lack of facilities and finance
- (iii) Market limitations associated with high cost of transport.
- (iv) Poor quality which limits potential overseas markets for high value products.
- (v) Delays in the start-up of capital works
- (vi) Lack of information circulation by some provinces which limits intentions to provide effective technical advice.
- (vii) Difficulties in the recruitment of competent staff to implement projects.

To overcome these constraints, the Department will;

- (i) through the Resource Development Branch, monitor and evaluate the ongoing operations of the Fishing Authorities and take appropriate action to ensure increased production and participation by village fishermen.
- (ii) through the Fisheries Extension and Training Centres work closely with fishermen to develop their skills on craft construction and maintenance, engine repairs and fish handling and marketing.
- (iii) continue to support Provincial Local Coastal Fisheries Projects through provision of technical advice and implementation
- (iv) monitor works programmes to ensure projects are on target
- (v) concentrate on problem areas with the ultimate aim of improving the current situation by providing alternate approaches to the overall programme.

#### Riverine Fisheries Stock Enhancement and Aquaculture Programmes

There are no significant commercial inland fisheries in PNG

except that for barramundi, a fish that spends part of its life cycle in salt water. The important inland fisheries are subsistence or small-scale fisheries, centered on large flood-plain river systems. Inland fishery yield is estimated at 12,000 tonnes per year, which is about the same as the coastal subsistence production.

Approximately 84% of the population of PNG lives inland. The number of people fishing in the inland areas is around 10 times the number of people fishing on the coast. Despite this the bulk of the budget devoted to the development of fisheries resources has always been spent on the investigation and development of marine resources. Inland fisheries have tended to be ignored because governments do not receive revenue from them.

While they do not generate revenue for governments, inland fisheries do have considerable 'economic' importance. Few inland fishermen fish commercially, but their catch is beneficial to them nutritionally and as a means of barter for other products. Little or no capital investment or expenditure of foreign exchange has been required on the part of governments to maintain and expand these fisheries. The present yield of the Sepik River floodplain is approximately 3,000 to 5,000 tonnes per year.

Two inland fisheries projects have been established, both with the broad aim of increasing fish production in inland areas. The Sepik River Fish Stock Enhancement Project aims at determining options for the improvement of the fishery, which at present has a low yield. This includes the consideration of fish species introductions in order to improve fish stocks for subsistence and commercial purposes. This project receives technical assistance from the UNDP.

The Highlands Aquaculture Development Project was established in 1984 with the assistance of FAO/UNDP to revive village aquaculture in Highlands provinces. The project aims to boost fish production and provide income-earning opportunities for village people. As well as increasing the production of carp fingerlings for distribution, the project will experiment with integrated farming and provide extension services to village fish farmers.

The Sepik Project has been hampered by the delayed arrival of project equipment and personnel. Now that these are in place, it is due to produce summary findings by November, 1989. The Aquaculture Project's pond construction programme had been delayed for a year due to the unavailability of land at Aiyura, Eastern Highlands Province, the project site. However, the land was received in February this year and Phase I of the project should be completed by December, 1988.