

12 July 1982

ORIGINAL : ENGLISH

SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

FOURTEENTH REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING ON FISHERIES

(Noumea, New Caledonia, 2-6 August 1982)

COUNTRY STATEMENT - REPUBLIC OF KIRIBATI

SUMMARY

1. The Government of the Republic of Kiribati places the highest priority on the development of its marine resources as the exploitation of these represents the mainstay of the economy.
2. The Fisheries Division of the Ministry of Natural Resource Development is responsible for the developments covering the following areas.
 - 1) Tuna fishery
 - 2) Artisanal fishery
 - 3) Aquaculture
 - 4) Licensing
 - 5) Training
3. A National commercial tuna fishing Company Te Mautari is developing this sector with expected 4 vessels by the end of the year. A local marketing scheme also operates under the company.
4. Fisheries Assistants are based on Outer Islands to improve the artisanal fishery in providing gear, increase fishing to meet local demands advice and liaise with Fisheries Division on small projects and processing.
5. Production from the present 40 ha of milkfish pond is progressing steadily with encouraging market results.

The contraction of a further 40 ha under EEC funds is progressing well.

On Kiritimati the milkfish culture ponds are used primarily for export of chilled milkfish to Honolulu.
6. Current licensing agreements with Japan only.

SPC log books presently used need some adjustments.
7. Fisheries training programmes are progressing. Other Fisheries staff have been attending courses in UK, Philippines, Suva and the SPC sponsored course at Nelson Polytechnic.

ORIGINAL : ENGLISH

SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

FOURTEENTH REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING ON FISHERIES
(Noumea, New Caledonia, 2-6 August 1982)

COUNTRY STATEMENT - REPUBLIC OF KIRIBATI

1. The Republic of Kiribati is composed of three groups of islands, the Gilberts, the Phoenix and the Line group. The 33 islands make up the country's total land mass of less than 500 square miles and are stretched over 2,000 miles equatorial Pacific.
2. The 200 mile fishery zone of the country gives it control over 1,015,000 square nautical miles. The cessation of phosphate mining on Banaba in November 1979 has meant that marine resources have become the alternative basis for the economy.
3. For this reason, the Government places the highest priority on the development of these resources.

Fisheries Division

4. The Fisheries Division forms part of the Ministry of Natural Resource Development. The headquarter is at Tanaea in Tarawa Atoll where most of the staff are based.
5. There is a section on Kiritimati (Christmas Island) which covers the Line Islands group.
6. The establishment of a section on the Phoenix group is not viable as yet.
7. In total the division has a staff of 80. The development programme of the Fisheries Division covers 4 main areas.
 - a. Tuna fishing industry
 - b. Artisanal fishery & Extension programme
 - c. Aquaculture
 - d. Licensing and Management
 - e. Training

Tuna Fishing Industry

8. As a result of resource survey by JICA in 1977 and 1978 and further trials and training by UNDP/FAO projects, a government owned fishing Company 'Te Mautari Ltd' was established in February 1981 to operate a commercial pole and line fishery with two 100 grt vessels, to export the catch as well as operate a local fish marketing scheme. A fishermen cooperative was also formed under the marketing scheme.

9. The first operational year of the vessels was limited due to the transportation runs which had to be made by the catcher boats to Majuro as a Transshipment connection to Honolulu. A mothership is now available to transport catch.

10. The first years results showed that:-

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Catch of the two vessels | - | 780 MT |
| Highest Catch/Day | - | 18 Tons (14-16 poles) |
| Average Catch/Day | - | 3-4 Tons |
| Fish Marketing Purchase | - | 205,000 \$A |
| Local tuna vessels catch | - | 180 MT |

11. The first stage in the development of a local Tuna Industry is now underway and two more fishing vessels are expected in 1983. Te Mautari Ltd is now a separate entity with the General Manager and Accountant from UK and four Japanese experts for the catcher boats. The rest are all local workers.

Artisanal Fishery

12. The development of this sector has a very important role in the rural areas.

13. Greater emphasis has been placed in this section as of 1980 when an 15m Extension Vessel was obtained from Australian aid.

14. The extension programme has hence progressed steadily. Fisheries assistants (F.A) have been placed on 4 of the Islands. Initially the move was in the supply of fishing gears. Formation of fishing groups are encouraged as this forms the basis for more efficient fishing units.

15. All of the 4 islands have fishing groups. The collected catch records showed very encouraging results of group participation. Advice is given mostly on better salting methods and improved materials.

16. Ice making machines are expected to be installed and closely examined on a trial basis to assess their viability and running costs in an outer island.

17. Market outlet has been one of the major constraints to greater production especially due to the variety of species. Ciguatoxicity of some fishes has also limited the market outlet.

18. A boat building consultancy from UNDP has been in Tarawa to help recommend a design for a boat for outer island use and suitable to local conditions. It is envisaged that a boat building scheme will eventuate and the boats made available to artisanal fishermen on soft loan terms.

19. The farming of an agarophyte seaweed Eucheuma, is seen as ideal for a cottage industry on outer islands. A V.S.O. has been working on this in Kiritimati and been making trial growing in lagoons of some outer islands. Production growth rates of about 3½ tons of fresh seaweed/week have been obtained. It is expected that market outlet will be in US and NZ. Trial growings of a cockle (Anadara sp) in some islands has also been initiated with assistance from USP's Atoll Research Unit.

Aquaculture

20. A total of 40 ha of fish ponds under UNDP/FAO project management is currently terminating towards end of June. A local Aquaculture Manager undergoing training will take over as the project will be handed over to Fisheries.

21. The total fish production during 1981 was 32.6 m. tons, out of which 20.9 m. tons were live bait and rest food fish. The production rates estimated for the 2nd half year was 1,547 kg/ha/yr in the intensive culture ponds and 1,51 kg/ha/year in these extensive culture ponds. App. 8 ha of pond area were used for intensive culture and 30 ha for extensive culture.

22. The cost of fish production was worked out as A\$0.93 per kg for food fish by extensive culture methods and A\$2.38/kg for live bait (including transport to delivery site), with full capacity production the bait cost may be brought down further.

23. The total value of fish sales during the year was A\$50,545.59.

24. A total of approximately 2.2 million fry were collected from centres in North Tarawa and transported to the farm. The villagers were paid \$5.05 per 1,000 as collection charges for the fry. This fry industry is attracting more and more villagers.

25. The construction of an extension of a further 40 ha of ponds funded by EEC is now progressing satisfactorily.

26. On Kiritimati, the 750 ha extensive culture pond system is used primarily for culturing chanoes which are harvested and exported chilled to Honolulu.

27. About 2-2.5 tons of milkfish are harvested every week for export. The harvested size of 30-65 cms (about 1 kg) is estimated to take about 15-18 months to grow. This rather slow growth is attributed to the high salinity. (100 ppt.)

Licensing

28. As of June 1982, some 259 Japanese vessels have been licensed to fish within the Kiribati 200 mile zones, the licensed fleet consists of 129 pole and line vessels and 130 long line vessels. The lump sum limit is 370 vessels and thereafter a fee is paid on a per vessel basis.

29. The present situation in regard to the issue of a licence is that the applicant's name and vessel details are cabled (soon to be telexed) in to the Licensing Officer who then cables back approval - if warranted. On receipt of the written applicant details, a licence is then issued by the licensing officer who sends it back to the Owner's Organisation. The system, though somewhat cumbersome, has worked well so far, replacing the previous system of licence issue by the parent owner's organisation. The main problem that we have faced is in regard to applicant details which, even when copied faithfully onto the licence, are later often found to be erroneous, usually in regard to correct Japanese address details but sometimes registration numbers have been wrong or the wrong letter typed in a call sign. Kiribati looks forward to the implementation of the Nauru Agreement and the introduction of the Regional Register; our experience has shown that there needs to be a double-check system on vessel/applicant details otherwise errors are liable to become enshrined within the system. However the advent of a simple standard number system which will recall all details as well as providing for instant recognition within the region is seen as simplifying the issue of licenses enormously.

(i) Control

Kiribati has not at present any form of surveillance other than an occasional spot check. We are in process of developing a patrol system appropriate to our resources and sea area, and we hope to commence trials this year.

(ii) Log Books

We are at present using modified SPC forms for both pole and line and long - line fishing vessels. Delegates may be aware that there are details which we regard as valid for recording in our area and which are not catered for in the SPC form. Sea surface temperature in the surface fishery is valuable in our experience and we collect this from the Japanese vessels. We also find of value the entry of number and weight against species catch and we note with appreciation, SPC's willingness to redesign the long - line forms to meet our needs in this respect.

Training

30. The arrival of a T.C.O. Fisheries Training Officer in May 1982 has enabled continuation of the training programme. Ten fisheries assistant trainees are now on the course.

31. After a six months course encompassing the whole of the fisheries division programmes, the F.A's will be posted to outer islands and incorporated in the extension and management programmes.

32. SPC funded a training for one candidate to the Nelson Polytechnic in New Zealand.

33. A fisheries officer is also due to leave for the Hull Diploma in Tropical Fisheries in September.

34. Fishing vessel personnel (Mates and Engineers) have continuously been attending the Institute of Technology in Suva.
