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(Noumea, New Caledonia, 4-8 August 1986)

AN OUTLINE OF
SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION FISHERIES TRAINING ACTIVITIES

(Paper prepared by the Secretariat)

A) INTRODUCTION

1. The South Pacific Commission (SPC) is an international organisation which provides technical advice, training and assistance in social, economic and cultural fields to the governments and administrations of the Pacific islands region. The Commission's area of operation is shown on the map at Appendix 1 and covers over 30 million square kilometres, of which less than two per cent is land. All 22 political entities within this area are members of the Commission on an equal basis, regardless of their political status. Five metropolitan countries outside the Commission's area of operation are also members, but are not eligible to benefit directly from SPC programmes.

2. The SPC employs some 147 staff distributed among its headquarters in Noumea, bases in Fiji and Sydney, and field programmes. About 63 are directly involved in the implementation of the work programme, of which 19 are involved in fisheries-related work. The Commission's fisheries activities are split into two programmes - the Coastal Fisheries Programme (CFP) and the Tuna and Billfish Assessment Programme (TBAP). The total budget of the SPC in 1985 was about US\$ 3.7 million, which was supplemented by extra-budgetary funds of about US\$ 3.8 million. Expenditure on fisheries programme activities totalled just almost \$ 1.3 million (CFP-US\$ 600,000 : TBAP - US\$ 675,000).

3. The aim of this paper is to provide an account of SPC's activities in the field of fisheries training. These are wide-ranging in terms of the level at which training is carried out, the means by which it is implemented, and the subject areas that are addressed. Some activities directly related to training - such as the identification of training priorities, student assessment, course evaluation, and funding aspects of training activities - are also briefly discussed. For convenience of presentation, the Commission's fisheries training activities are discussed in roughly the order in which they were initiated or carried out, i.e. chronologically. The headings under which they are discussed are as follows:

- Historical (paragraphs 4, 5)
- ORAF/DSFD Projects (6 - 8)
- SPC/Nelson Polytechnic Pacific Islands Fisheries Officer Course (9, 10)
- Practical Fishing Module (11, 12)
- Fisheries Training Project (13 - 16)
- Regional Refrigeration Assessment and Training Project (17, 18)
- Fisheries Statistics Training (19 - 21)
- Fish Handling and Processing Project (22, 23)
- Observer Training (24)
- Echo Sounder Courses (25)
- Training in Fish Stock Assessment (26)
- Course in Catching Methods and Extension Skills (27 - 30)
- Inter-country Study Visits (31)
- Production of Training Materials (32, 33)

Brief mention is then made of the way in which these activities are funded.

B) SPC FISHERIES TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Historical

4. The South Pacific Commission was established in 1947, and its Coastal Fisheries Programme can be said to date back to 1953, when the first SPC Fisheries Officer was appointed. The Commission's first major fisheries training activity was a 3-month course for Fisheries Officers, carried out in Noumea in 1956. The course aimed to provide core training for individuals who would subsequently staff the then embryonic Fisheries departments of the region, many of which were heavily supported by the Commission in the first instance.

5. Since that time, the Commission has been more or less continuously involved in providing training to the fisheries sector, particularly at a vocational level. A further Fisheries Officer course, this time at Tulagi in the Solomon Islands, was held in 1961. Two boatbuilding courses (18 months and 1 year) were held at Auki, also in the Solomon Islands, in 1960 and 1963. The practice of organising and financing inter-country study visits, to enable selected individuals from Pacific Island countries to carry out specialised study tours elsewhere in the region, began in 1962 (see para 31). Financial support for courses in boatbuilding and in marine mechanics was provided for the Technical Institute in Nouville, New Caledonia, in 1963 and 1968 respectively. Similar funding support was provided for another marine mechanics course at Honiara, Solomon Islands, in 1968. During the period 1968 to 1975, attachment and counterpart training formed a major component of a wide variety of Commission activities, particularly in the fields of resource assessment, aquaculture, and the design and construction of fishing vessels.

ORAF/DSFD Projects

6. 1975 saw the establishment of the Outer Reef Artisanal Fisheries (ORAF) Project, a field fishing programme which aimed to adapt and refine techniques for the capture of deep-bottom fish on the outer reef slopes. This project operated in five SPC member countries between 1975 and 1978, and provided baseline resource and economic assessments as a basis for the development of fishery.

7. In 1978, the ORAF project was re-organised and re-named the Deep Sea Fisheries Development (DSFD) Project. The original fishing team was split up, the new system being that individual Project master fishermen work in collaboration with national fisheries departments in carrying out resource assessments, experimental fishing, or other activities as requested by the country concerned. The DSFD project is still operating, and has to date carried out 39 assignments, of a varied nature, in 16 SPC countries and territories.

8. Training was an important function of the ORAF Project, and is emphasised still further in the DSFD Project. In the main, training is carried out on a national (rather than regional or sub-regional) basis, at one or more levels determined in agreement with the host country. At the most basic level, training consists of simple demonstration of one or more selected fishing methods, and associated gear-rigging techniques, to rural fishermen, carried out in their home environment (village-level, often using fishermen's own boats and gear). At a higher level, the more committed fishermen may be selected for more in-depth training. Depending on the requirements of the situation, this may extend beyond fishing skills into the fields of vessel handling and maintenance, navigation, engine repair and maintenance, fish handling and processing, and basic business and cash management skills. Incorporation of these aspects usually requires the training to be more formal with 'classroom' sessions as well as seagoing components. Finally at the highest level, is the training of counterparts usually government fisheries officers whose duties normally include village-level extension or training activities. The counterpart would normally work alongside the masterfisherman and assist with all aspects of his duties. At the end of his attachment period, he should be able to carry out one or more specialised fishing techniques and related seagoing activities at a level which fisherman will respect. In addition, since 1984, there has been a growing tendency for third-party countries to send trainees on short-term (1-3 month) attachments to the master fishermen, and this practice is likely to continue in future.

SPC/Nelson Polytechnic Pacific Islands Fisheries Officer Course

9. Another long-running training activity has been the SPC/Nelson Polytechnic Pacific Island Fisheries Officer Course (the "Nelson Course"), which is being run for the seventh time in 1986. The first course, held in 1979, was developed in response to requests for general fisheries and seamanship training from three Pacific Island countries, and was based on the New Zealand Fishing Cadet Course. Other countries subsequently requested the opportunity for similar training, but modified to more closely match the needs of Pacific Island countries. The Nelson course was adapted to this end, and has since become an annual event (except for 1981 when it was suspended pending a financial review by the New Zealand Government). Including the 1986 intake, a total of 81 trainees have now participated in the Nelson Course (approximately 12 per course). Major funding for the course is provided by the New Zealand Government with significant additional funding provided by the Commonwealth Foundation, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the South Pacific Commission and the FAO/UNDP South Pacific Regional Fisheries Development Programme.

10. Since its inception, the Nelson Course has been subject to a continuing process of review and modification, to ensure it retains its relevance to Pacific Island countries, and to new developments in the fisheries of the region. This may account in some part for its continuing popularity (24 nominations were received for the 12 available places in 1986). The stated objective of the course is to provide basic training in the skills required by a Pacific Island Fisheries Officer operating an extension office, fish buying station, or similar infrastructure establishment, and who is therefore responsible for providing physical support or services to rural fishing communities. These skills include: practical netting, rope work and seamanship: fishing theory and fisheries science: navigation and chartwork: refrigeration: fish handling and quality assessment: metalwork, engineering and welding: marine diesel and outboard maintenance and repair: small boat construction and maintenance: and practical fishing. The course lasts for 18 weeks and a strong emphasis is placed on 'hands-on' training. As well as spending much of their time in the Polytechnics' workshops and net loft, trainees also spend short periods attached to fish processing establishments, government laboratories, and other institutions in New Zealand, to complement the classroom instruction.

Practical Fishing Module

11. As part of the first four Nelson courses, students were required to spend 3 weeks at sea on New Zealand fishing vessels to gain seagoing and fishing experience. It was recognised that this experience, while useful in a general sense, was not of direct relevance to the local fisheries of most Pacific island countries. In 1984, the New Zealand-based sea time was dropped from the course, allowing expansion of other subject areas. To replace it, a 5-week practical fishing module, supplementary to the main part of the course, was organised on a trial basis. The Nelson students travelled to Fiji at the end of the Nelson course, where, under the supervision of one of the SPC Master Fishermen, they participated in a programme of practical fishing and related seagoing activities, using small vessels and practising techniques directly relevant to the tropical Pacific islands. As well as actual fishing, trainees put into practice many of the skills learned in the classroom or workshop in Nelson and participated in exercises in fishing vessel management.

12. The first practical fishing module was organised on a trial basis, with the aim of further developing it for incorporation into future Nelson courses if the approach showed promise. The success of the module was very encouraging, and it was repeated in Fiji as part of the 1985 Nelson course, being extended to 6 weeks to allow for time lost due to travel. At the invitation of the government of Tonga, the 1986 practical fishing module was based in Vava'u, and this practical fishing element will be incorporated into future 'Nelson' courses.

Regional Fisheries Training Project

13. As noted earlier, the Nelson course is subject to a continuing process of review and, where appropriate, modification. In connection with this process, a detailed appraisal of the course was carried out in 1984, in co-operation with the New Zealand Government. Questionnaires were circulated to all former course participants, requesting comment on the course, the relevance of the subjects taught to the present occupation of the trainee, areas of weakness and strength in the course, and on subjects which could usefully be incorporated or dropped from the syllabus. A second questionnaire was circulated to senior fisheries administrators, seeking comment on the usefulness of the course, its relevance to national or departmental training priorities, and on its contribution to the skills, abilities or attitudes of former participants.

14. Response to the questionnaire survey was good, and led to some further modification to the Nelson course syllabus. In a broader sense, however, the survey made clear that many national training priorities, particularly in the vocational field, were not being fully addressed by existing training programmes. Following the survey, the subject of fisheries training was raised and discussed in depth at the SPC's Sixteenth Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries, held in August 1984. The discussions led to a recommendation that the SPC establish a Fisheries Training Project (FTP), which should be designed as a vehicle through which the SPC could organise specialised training courses in given subject fields in response to country demand. The FTP was approved by the South Pacific Conference in October 1984 and became operative in August 1985 with the appointment of an SPC Fisheries Training Officer as its co-ordinator.

15. During the year leading up to its establishment, a series of priority activities were developed for the Fisheries Training Project by discussion and correspondence with national fisheries officials. These were discussed at and endorsed by the 1985 SPC Fisheries Meeting as follows:

- (i) Review existing training arrangements and disseminate this information to member countries;
- (ii) Assess the training needs of individual member countries through consultative visits and develop action programmes to address these needs;
- (iii) Continue existing or planned activities;
- (iv) Develop regional training programmes in priority areas identified by the Seventeenth Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries as listed below:
 - (a) Marine engineering
 - (b) Outboard engineering
 - (c) Refrigeration engineering
 - (d) Business management
 - (e) Fish handling and processing
 - (f) Communication skills
 - (g) Fish marketing
 - (h) Aquaculture training
 - (i) Navigation and chartwork
 - (j) Fishing operations
 - (k) Fishing gear design and development
 - (l) Fish quality control.

16. In the 12 months since the establishment of the Fisheries Training Project, considerable progress has been made on these priority activities. For item (i), a Directory of fisheries training opportunities available to Pacific island countries is now in draft form and will be circulated for critical review and comment. When published in final form, this will provide full details of all relevant fisheries-related training courses offered by educational institutions world-wide, with the emphasis on those most available to countries of the region. An evaluation of several courses which are heavily patronised by Pacific island countries is also under way, by means of a questionnaire survey of former course participants and of Pacific Island fisheries officials, similar to that carried out for the Nelson course. As regards item (ii), much useful information on the training requirements of individual countries and territories had already been obtained through the earlier questionnaire survey, through correspondence and discussion with national fisheries and other officials, and from several surveys carried out in the region, particularly the 1984 survey of Pacific island fisheries development needs carried out by the Forum Fisheries Agency. This has been supplemented by field visits to many countries of the region by the Fisheries Training Officer and other SPC staff, and several national level training initiatives are currently under development. These include a coastal navigation course for Western Samoan fishermen, and a course in beche-de-mer collection, processing and marketing for PNG fisheries extension officers. Item (iii) referred to the Nelson course, and to several training initiatives already under development at the time the FTP was established. Regarding item (iv), several training programmes in these fields are under way or planned, as described in the following paragraphs.

Regional Refrigeration Assessment And Training Project

17. This activity was developed as a joint programme between SPC, FAO and UNDP, in response to a number of requests from Pacific island countries to SPC and to the FAO South Pacific Regional Fisheries Development Programme, for specialised training to be developed for fisheries sector refrigeration engineers. Planning for the project began in 1983 and implementation commenced in August 1984 after endorsement by Pacific Island Fisheries officials attending that years SPC Fisheries Technical Meeting. The project took place in two phases. The first, the assessment phase, involved making an inventory of the refrigeration plant used in fisheries-related activities in the region, and providing comment on any problems associated with their utilisation (including comment on training where appropriate). The assessment was carried out by an SPC staff member and a consultant refrigeration engineer, who together visited 12 Pacific island countries to examine equipment and interview technicians, engineers, plant managers, fisheries officers and representatives of Technical Training institutions.

The second phase of the project consisted of a 19-week course for fisheries sector refrigeration technicians, hosted in Rarotonga by the Cook Islands Government. Many of the trainees on the course were selected during the earlier assessment phase, and the course syllabus itself was planned in accordance with the observations made and the areas of concern defined during the assessment. The course was pitched at a level suitable for electricians, ships engineers and others with a good mechanical background but limited familiarity with refrigeration equipment and most of the trainees fell into this category. Fourteen trainees from eleven countries participated in this successful activity.

18. The original project allowed for one course only, but the option for a second and possibly subsequent courses was left open, and was to be exercised depending upon the number of suitably qualified nominations to the first course, and the Commission's evaluation of its success. In the event, response to the first course was extremely positive and Pacific island fisheries officials expressed strong support for its being repeated, and for increased training in refrigeration being made available. The second course commenced in June (June 9 - October 17, 1986) again as a joint SPC/FAO/UNDP exercise, based in Rarotonga, and pitched at the same level. Eighteen students from fourteen countries are attending the 1986 course, two of whom attended the earlier course and are returning for further specialised training. Discussions are presently under way as to the possibility of running a third course, at a much more basic level, in 1987. At present, it is envisaged that this would be based in Papua New Guinea and that the intake would be restricted to the melanesia sub-region.

Fisheries Statistics Training

19. Pacific Island countries have been emphasising the need for improved statistics on national and international fisheries of the region for many years. Several attempts to set up national fisheries statistics programmes have been made, but many have foundered because of a lack of locally trained staff. In order to provide basic training in statistics and their application to fisheries, a two-week fisheries statistics course was organised through the SPC TBAP. The course was run in September 1984, and was attended by 22 trainees, who were instructed in the fundamentals of statistical data collection, analysis and interpretation, using examples taken from the fisheries of the SPC region.

20. During 1985, further follow-up training was organised for participants of the 1984 course. Trainees returned to Noumea in groups of 4-6 for an additional week of training, in four separate groups. The follow-up training emphasised the use of micro-computers for fisheries statistics, as well as allowing the trainees to work alongside TBAP staff and become familiar with the region's biggest fisheries statistics programme.

21. Several countries have since requested SPC assistance in the establishment of national fisheries statistics programmes. In response to one such request, TBAP staff and a consultant statistician spent several weeks in 1985 designing and establishing a data sampling programme for local fisheries in Funafuti, Tuvalu. The establishment of the programme involved a substantial training element, whereby local fisheries staff were instructed in the detailed execution of the sampling programme and in basic data analysis. This is likely to be an area of increasing SPC activity in future.

Fish Handling And Processing Project

22. This project originated from a workshop on fish handling and processing, held as part of the 15th SPC Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries in 1983. The workshop identified training in fish handling and simple processing as a priority need in the region, if countries were to succeed in developing and expanding both national and export markets for fishery products. The Meeting strongly recommended that the Commission expand its DSFD Project (paras 6 to 8) to include a bigger fish handling and processing component, or develop a similar project which would make available the services of a Fish Handling and Processing Officer. This specialist would undertake short country assignments after the manner of the SPC Master Fishermen, but would be concerned with post-harvest aspects of fisheries development. The project's major priority is to provide training, both at counterpart level and via courses of varying length and sophistication, to individuals or institutions involved in the handling and processing of fish at any point along the distribution chain. This can include fishermen, store managers, wholesalers, retailers, and consumers, depending on the requirements of the country concerned. Other potential project activities include assistance with product development, packaging and marketing. Funding for this programme was provided by the New Zealand Government, which became operational in April 1986 with the appointment of the Fish Handling and Processing Officer.

23. The first activity to be undertaken under this project is a regional course in Fish Handling and Processing, now under way in Vanuatu (9 June - 15 August). The course, which lasts for 10 weeks, is directed at individuals who run or are involved in centralised fish buying and selling operations, or whose normal duties involve a large element of this type of work. Subjects areas covered in the course syllabus include: theory of fish spoilage, and ways of increasing storage life, including freezing, salting, smoking and drying: on-board handling of fish catches, including bleeding, spiking and coring, first-stage processing, and icing: on-shore grading, processing, preparation and display of fresh fish products:

chilling, freezing, glazing, cold storage, freezer management and stock arrangement: preparation of specialist export products, including sashimi or prime-grade chilled fish, fillets, bulk packs and shatterpack: marketing, packaging and product development: and store management, including record-keeping, cash management, stock control and equipment maintenance. The course is being co-ordinated by SPC Officers, but with many of the lectures and practicals given by consultants from a number of specialist organisations. These include the UK Tropical Research and Development Institute, the New Zealand Fishing Industry Board, the Vanuatu Fish Marketing Company, the New South Wales Fish Market Authority, and FAO. As well as being a comprehensive course, tailored specifically to the needs and realities of Pacific island fisheries, the course will act as a launch pad for the Fish Handling and Processing Project, focussing attention on the subject field and facilitating the establishment of contacts between SPC and appropriate national institutions.

Observer Training

24. Three national-level observer training workshops were carried out in the Solomon Islands, FSM, and Kiribati in March/April 1986, in response to requests from those countries. The workshops, carried out by the staff of the SPC TBAP and the FAO/UNDP Regional Fisheries Development Programme of Suva, Fiji, lasted from 3-5 days, depending on the requirements of the country concerned. The training centered around the need for improved and standardised reporting procedures by national observers placed on foreign fishing vessels, and the use of daily forms to improve the quality of observer records.

Echo Sounder Courses

25. Two courses on the use and application of acoustic sounding techniques, each of three days duration, are scheduled to take place in Noumea in August 1986, one on either side of the 18th SPC Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries. The courses are organised via the Fisheries Training Project under priority item (j) (fishing operations), in response to the growing use of more sophisticated echo-sounders, and especially chromascopes (colour sounders) in the region for the deployment of fish aggregation devices and for experimental fishing by government research or fishing vessels. The courses will be limited to 6 participants each and will be carried out by specialists from the Nelson Polytechnic School of Fishing. The course will make extensive use of the Polytechnics' echo-sounder simulator, which will be temporarily installed in Noumea and used to compare the abilities and limitations of different types of echo-sounder. The course will cover the theory of echo-sounding, practical applications, and equipment maintenance.

Training in Fish Stock Assessment

26. A two-week training workshop on fish stock assessment was held from 30 June to 11 July 1986 at SPC headquarters in Noumea. The workshop was attended by 10 participants from 10 countries and was taught by TBAP staff and one external consultant. The primary course objective was to provide fisheries officers with the background to assist them in planning stock assessment projects and in critically evaluating their results. The subjects covered in the workshop include: fish population dynamics, the bioeconomics of fisheries development: stock assessment methods: case studies in stock assessment in developing countries: common problems in stock assessment: and the role of stock assessment in fisheries management.

Course In Catching Methods and Extension Skills

27. This is a six-week course scheduled to take place in Suva, Fiji, commencing late September 1986. The course was originally requested as a national-level activity by the Fiji Government, but strong interest from other Pacific Island countries has led to provision being made for a number of trainees from outside Fiji to attend. The total number of participants will be limited to 12, of which 8 places will be open to trainees from outside Fiji.

28. The course is designed for extension officers whose duties are to advise small-scale commercial fishermen on ways of improving the effectiveness of their fishing operations, specifically in the technical aspects of fishing itself. The course is split into two sections. The first, of four weeks, is concerned with developing the trainee's fishing skills. This section will be supervised by one, or possibly two, SPC Master Fishermen who will instruct the trainees in theoretical and practical aspects of deep-bottom handreel fishing, gill netting, verandah netting, and if time permits, vertical longlining. At the end of the course, the participants should be able to carry out these fishing techniques with a level of expertise that other fishermen will respect.

29. The second section of the course, lasting two weeks, attempts to develop the trainee's communication skills. This will be carried out by the SPC Fisheries Training Officer with specialist assistance as required and will be based partly on teacher training methods and partly on agricultural extension training techniques. Subjects covered will include public speaking, organising meetings, planning lectures and discussions, and talking to fishermen in a way they will understand and respond to. As a finishing exercise, the trainee group will be required to plan, prepare, organise and carry out two one-day 'extension training sessions' in neighbouring coastal villages.

30. The overall aim of the course is thus to help participants attain superior knowledge and skill levels in a number of basic fishing techniques, and then develop in them the means of effectively communicating these skills to others. This course is the first serious attempt by the SPC to address the very difficult issue of training fisheries extension officers. Training in extension and communication skills is regarded as a high or the highest priority area of need by a majority of Pacific island countries. It therefore seems likely that this type of training will become an increasingly important area of activity for the SPC Fisheries Training Project in the near future. The Commission has accordingly been active in recent months in soliciting input on the subject from Pacific island fisheries officials and appropriately qualified individuals and training institutions. The subject will be discussed at length during a one-day workshop on extension and training to be held in conjunction with the 18th SPC Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries in August. Future initiatives in this field will depend on the outcome of those discussions.

Inter-Country Study Visits

31. The Commission has an annual budget (which is quite limited - approx. US\$ 33,000 in 1985, cut back to \$ 13,000 in 1986 due to budgetary restraints - although it may be bolstered by extra-budgetary funds) for funding study visits to Pacific island countries by specialists from other Pacific island countries. These funds are not limited to use for fisheries-related purposes but are available to all disciplines, with applications being considered on merit. The total number of inter-country study visits related to fisheries has been small in recent years, since many well-justified applications are unsuccessful simply due to lack of funds. Examples of recent visits which have taken place include:

- fisheries officer from PNG to study fisheries extension programmes in Vanuatu and Fiji;
- boatbuilder from Fiji to study alternative vessel designs and construction techniques in Tonga, then attend workshop on small boats in Noumea;
- fish marketing officer from Yap, FSM, to study fish marketing and export practices in Palau;
- second officer of pole-and-line vessel in Tuvalu to study alternatives to the bouke-aim method of bait capture, in Truk, FSM;
- senior fisheries officer from Fiji to study national tuna fishing operations in American Samoa.

Production of Training Materials

32. Course materials (lecture notes, handouts, etc.) are an integral part of many formal training courses and often take substantial effort to produce. In many cases, these can stand alone as useful reference texts, or may provide a model on which other national or international organisations can base similar training activities. In such cases, the Commission makes course materials freely available to potential users and in special cases (i.e. where adequate funds are available) these may be issued as a formal publication. SPC Handbook No.26 (Fisheries Statistics Training Course Lecture Notes - see para 19) is one such example. Another, currently in preparation, is an observer training manual, based on course materials used in the recent observer training workshops (para 24).

33. Other training materials are also produced which are not directly associated with any specific course, but which are considered to be useful aids both to SPC field training activities, and to national fisheries training programmes. These publications are generally in the form of handbooks: current examples include handbooks on beche-de-mer harvesting and processing (now out of print and undergoing revision), lobster storage and transport, fish aggregation device construction and deployment, fishing reel construction (in press), trolling (in press), and deep-water snapper fishing (in press). A number of other general training aids are also under consideration, including a series of posters on the care and maintenance of refrigeration equipment, and on other technical subjects.

D) TRAINING FELLOWSHIPS

34. The provision of fellowships which the Commission can apply to enable country participation in specific training activities. This is becoming an increasingly important source of funding for training activities, and one which the Commission is keen to promote. The fellowship system allows some flexibility in budgeting for training activities while allowing more predictability for forward planning (since some organisations commit themselves to providing a certain number of fellowships per year).

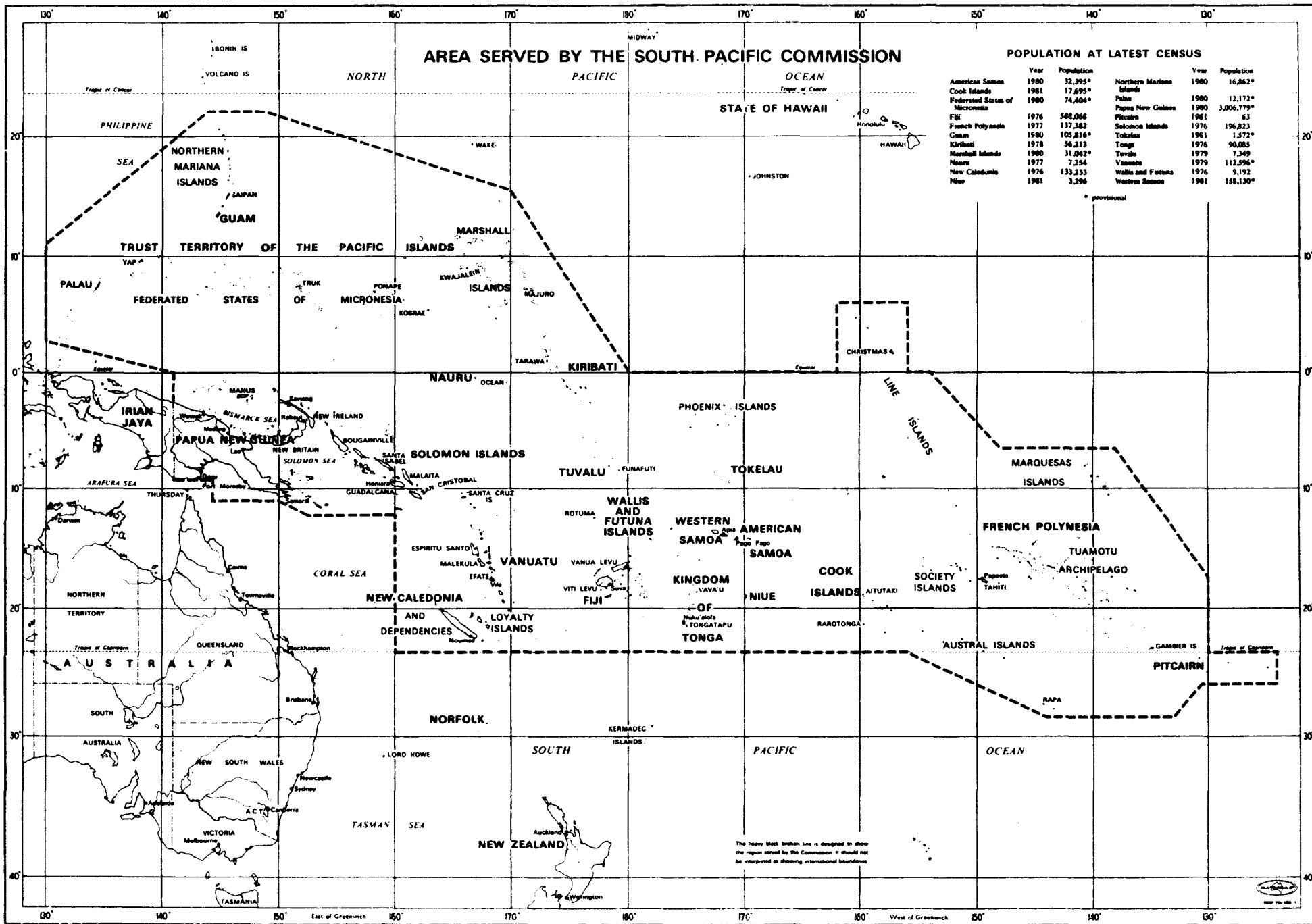
Since a single fellowship costs on average only US\$ 3,800 (based on average costs associated with a 10-week SPC course, or a 5-week training attachment to an SPC field programme), the system enables donors to make relatively small financial contributions with minimal administrative costs. The fellowship system also allows sympathetic donors to overstep political considerations which would otherwise prevent them providing block funding for training activities. For instance, fellowships cover direct costs of country participation only and there is no component for administrative or infrastructural costs, hence the fellowships are not being applied to the support of the SPC as an institution. Fellowships can be granted with a proviso that they are to be applied only to certain SPC member countries and territories - e.g. Commonwealth members, non-U.S. territories, francophone territories, etc., and to certain activities, e.g. Nelson Course, Catching Methods and Extension Skills Course, attachment to SPC Field Programmes, etc.

35. Organisations which have current commitments to provide fellowships include the Commonwealth Foundation, the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation and the FAO/UNDP South Pacific Regional Fisheries Development Programme.

SUMMARY

36. In summary, therefore, the Commission is involved in a wide variety of fisheries training activities throughout the Pacific islands region. These cover mainly technical subjects, ranging from the basic manual skills which pertain to the fishing industry, through mechanical and engineering subjects, and into more sophisticated theoretical fields such as stock assessment and communication skills. The types of training carried out also vary, from short demonstrations, through extensive periods of 'hands-on' attachment training, to longer practical or theoretical courses. Many of these activities are now co-ordinated under the umbrella of the Fisheries Training Project.

37. SPC fisheries training policy is to develop short, 'tailor-made' activities in response to demand from Pacific Island Countries, rather than to promote long-term institutionalised courses. Considerable care is taken to ensure that SPC training activities do not overlap or duplicate similar by other institutions in the region. The rationale for this policy is discussed elsewhere, but is fully endorsed at both technical and political levels by the countries of the SPC region.



AREA SERVED BY THE SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

POPULATION AT LATEST CENSUS

	Year	Population		Year	Population
American Samoa	1980	32,395*	Northern Mariana Islands	1980	16,862*
Cook Islands	1981	17,695*	Palau	1980	12,172*
Federated States of Micronesia	1980	74,404*	Papua New Guinea	1980	3,006,779**
	1976	588,068	Pitcairn	1981	63
French Polynesia	1977	137,382	Solomon Islands	1976	196,823
Guam	1980	105,816*	Tokelau	1961	1,572*
Kiribati	1978	56,213	Tonga	1976	90,085
Marshall Islands	1980	31,042*	Tuvalu	1979	7,349
Norfolk	1977	7,254	Vanuatu	1979	112,596*
New Caledonia	1976	133,233	Wallis and Futuna	1976	9,192
Niue	1981	3,296	Western Samoa	1981	158,130*

* provisional

The heavy black broken line is designed to show the region served by the Commission. It should not be interpreted as showing international boundaries.