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SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

TWENTY-SECOND REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING ON FISHERIES
(Noumea, New Caledonia, 6 - 10 August 1990)

COUNTRY STATEMENT - NIUE

FADS IN NIUE

Niue Fisheries Division is a component of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; since its inception in the 1970's. The smallness of Niue will probably direct and support this set up in the future.

In the past 3-4 years or so, Fisheries development in Niue has concentrated on improvement of the infrastructure, and lately training and provision of extension services, to fishermen. UNDP provided funds for the development of the Avatele Landing and 5 vehicular sea tracks, which FFA-USAID have provided funds to tarseal the gradients of 4. FFA-USAID also provided funds for the establishment of the Namukulu Landing, the purchase of the Fisheries Alia unit for hire, and trailers for the dinghy fisherfolks. FFA-USAID has also provided funds for the deployment of FADs. We have been very grateful for all this assistance.

The 1989 Agriculture census showed that as a result of these developments, the number of canoe fisherfolks has doubled while the dinghy fisherfolks have opted for larger fishing vessels. Still, the demand for fish outstrips supplies.

Pelagics local market prices range from \$6.50 to \$8.00 per kilo, baitfish (flying fish and decapterus) \$12.00 to \$15.00 per ten units, and bottom fish \$6.50 to \$12.00 per kilo. It is noted however, that the importation of frozen fish is almost zero, while the volume in the imports of tinned fish is declining rapidly.

Government's present policy to reduce the number of workers in the Public Service is putting a strain on the work load of the existing staff, which includes the deployment and maintenance of FADs, repairing of dinghies, construction of trailers, providing an alia hire service, reconstruction of canoe access tracks, and fishing extension training. The Fishermen's association has been reformed so that some responsibility can be given to them.

Very low catches of pelagics have been recorded in the last 3-4 years and as always the fishermen blame the Fisheries Division for not doing anything about it!

In the interest of further marine resource development, a marine resource survey has just been completed.

The Government of Niue wishes to express its appreciation to the UNDP/FAO Aquaculture programme, and the SPC for the personnel in undertaking the study. This would have been the very first time that Niue's Reef Resources had been assessed. Recommendations from this survey will determine the future economic developments and/or conservation/resource management measures to be instituted.

A resource assessment on the coconut crab stock is being carried out by the UNDP/FAO-Aquaculture Programme. Some local personnel have been trained in data collection and measurements.

A new Fisheries building will be constructed soon, to include a workshop area, training rooms, office space and related fishing gears. After Cyclone Ofa, the Fisheries Division's activities were split - to 3 sites, involving a lot of travelling about and tracing down of people for various consultations. Almost 100% of the Division's records and information were lost to Cyclone Ofa. But the only 2 FAD's, that were installed during 1989, remained intact after the cyclone. There was huge destruction of the submerged coral reefs on the leeward side on the island which bore the brunt of the cyclone forces.

Therefore, as well as reconstruction efforts, there will be a review of Niue's Fisheries/Marine related laws, and resource enhancement or conservation measures to be introduced.

We thank you SPC for whatever assistance it has provided Niue in this past year, and we look forward to a greater and better effort in the future.