

SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

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

COUNTRY STATEMENT

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

The Government

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) is a democratic constitutional federation of the four states of Kosrae, Pohnpei, Chuuk and Yap. It came into being as a distinct political entity in 1979 and became an independent nation on November 3, 1986. Under a Compact of Free Association with the United States, the FSM is responsible for its own internal and foreign affairs, while the U.S. has been delegated the responsibility for defense.

The (FSM) National Government, which is based in Palikir, Pohnpei, and the State Governments are divided into executive, legislative and judicial branches. The President and Vice-President are elected by the FSM Congress from among its fourteen Senators, who are popularity elected to represent each state. Popularly elected Governors head each State.

Fisheries Organizations of the National Government

Within the National Government, the Micronesian Maritime Authority MMA also plays a major role in developing fisheries policies for the FSM National Government.

During the past year more than 550 vessels were licensed to fish within the FSM EEZ. More than 140 purse seiners were registered in that year and the annual catch rose to more than 150,000 metric tonnes worth more than \$US 120 million dollars.

The MMA is continuing to negotiate license agreements to facilitate DWFN transshipment at FSM ports. Regular transshipments by Japanese longliners have commenced at Pohnpei and Yap and transshipments by other flags are expected to increase substantially this year.

The FSM National Fisheries Corporation is the business arm of the government, and was set up to commercially develop a tuna industry, enter into Joint-Venture agreements, to participate in commercial fishing projects, and to invest in the expansion and improvement of the FSM fishing industry.

The National Congress recently approved funding for the capitalization of the corporation and new projects include the development of tuna longline vessel transshipment bases through joint ventures with state entities of the federation.

The NFC board has also approved the necessary arrangements for the corporation's participation in a tuna joint venture with Pohnpei State which include the acquisition of purse seine vessels and the construction of tuna processing and cold storage facilities.

NFC in conjunction with OFCF is carrying out the second phase of the outer banks fishing and hydrographic survey in Chuuk and Yap states. SPC is assisting MMA with the interpretation and analysis of catch data from this project.

The National Marine Resources Division, which became operational in 1983, under the Department of Resources and Development, is responsible for providing technical information, training coordination, advisory services, and support for development and management activities in marine resources including fisheries, aquaculture, coastal resource management and other marine products. It coordinates daily with MMA and state agencies dealing with marine resources and maintains liaison through the Department of External Affairs, with foreign and international agencies concerning marine resources for the purpose of exchanging information on opportunities for training, marketing, project funding and related matters.

The Micronesia Maritime and Fisheries Academy in Yap was officially opened in February 1990. This privately operated institute is fully supported by the national and state governments. It will provide effective education and training in maritime and fisheries technologies, at both the college and high school levels. Theoretical and practical training will be emphasized including on-board training for maximum gains and benefits.

Other National Projects

1. **Fish Poisoning Prevention:** In order to protect the health of our citizens and visitors and to prevent restrictions on our development of fish exports, the FSM Marine Resources Division has taken the lead in regional activities to test for poisonous fish. With the assistance of the SPC, a testing protocol has recently been developed in preparation for further assistance through the SPC epidemiological unit.
2. **FSM Aquaculture Center:** The National Aquaculture Center is set-up to provide a focal point and expertise for demonstration, training, research and advisory services for all types of aquaculture in the FSM, beginning with a small hatchery and quarantine system for giant clams, trochus and green snail. Construction is near completion and other types of demonstration are envisioned.
3. **Regional Fishery Statistics Project:** The FSM Marine Resources obtained local and U.S. funding to establish a standardized, computerized fish catch data system covering local commercial and subsistence catches.
4. **Giant Clam Culture:** All the FSM states have had technicians trained in giant clam culture at Palau's Micronesia Mariculture Demonstration Center and have received young seed clams from there.
5. **Turtle Stock Enhancement:** The MRD continues to seek funds to hire Micronesian part time technicians to care for and increase survival rates of young sea turtle hatchlings and study the status of turtle stocks by tagging adults.
6. **Giant Clam Culture Regional Extension and Demonstration:** The MRD has obtained a giant clam extension agent based in Kosrae whose scope of services include all the US affiliated territories in demonstration and extension of giant clam culturing.

7. **Rabbitfish Cage and Culture:** The project aims to identify the available seedstock of siganus species, determine suitable pilot project sites and develop practical techniques and protocols for handling and culturing rabbitfish.
 8. **Sponge Growth Studies around Pohnpei:** Through the work of sponge culturist Mr Richard Croft the project sought to identify suitable sites and culturing methods for growing sponges by employing different techniques at variable sites and differing environmental conditions.
 9. **Sponge Stock Survey in Chuuk:** To assess the suitability of sites and the availability of the desired sponge varieties.
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