



SPC FISHERIES TECHNICAL MEETING PARTICIPANTS. Front row (l. to r.): Mr. W. A. Mackenzie (Netherlands New Guinea), Dr. A. M. Rapson (Papua and New Guinea), Dr. V. E. Brock (United States—Chairman), Dr. G. L. Kesteven (Australia), Mr. J. Domard (French Polynesia). Back row: Mr. Y. Sawamura (Tonga), Mr. L. Devambe (SPC), Mr. K. J. Garnett (Fiji), Mr. J. A. Tubb (FAO), Mr. P. T. Wilson (United States Trust Territory), Mr. Y. Magnier (New Caledonia), Mr. J. de Vries (Netherlands New Guinea), Mr. M. Aylett (British Solomon Islands), Mr. R. Powell (Cook Islands), Dr. J. Barrau (SPC).

SPC Fisheries Programme Re-Shaped

WITH the main purpose of studying and re-shaping the Commission's ten-year-old programme for developing fisheries in the region, a fisheries technical meeting was held at South Pacific Commission headquarters in Nouméa from February 5-13.

Thirteen fisheries experts attended from nine Pacific territories, the United States and Australia, and from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council. Dr. Vernon E. Brock, Director of the Biological Laboratory,

The South Pacific Commission's ten-year-old fisheries programme was reviewed and re-shaped by thirteen fisheries experts at a meeting held at SPC headquarters during February.

United States Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, Washington, was chairman. The meeting was organized under the direction of the Commission's executive officer for economic development, Dr. Jacques Barrau.

In opening the meeting on February 5, the Commission's Secretary-General, Mr.

T. R. Smith, briefly reviewed the Commission's past activities in the fisheries field. "We have been concerned", he said, "with small-scale surveys, with training of fishermen, with the introduction of new species of freshwater fish, with advice on the establishment of territorial fisheries services, with some problems of

SPC FISHERIES TECHNICAL MEETING: Participants

SPC FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dr. Vernon E. Brock	Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, Biological Laboratory, Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D.C., U.S.A.
Dr. G. L. Kesteven	Assistant Director (Fisheries), CSIRO, Division of Fisheries and Oceanography, Cronulla, N.S.W., Australia.
Mr. M. Legand	Océanographe Biologiste, Centre de Recherches Océanographiques, Institut Français d'Océanie, Nouméa, New Caledonia.
Dr. A. M. Rapson	Director, Division of Fisheries, Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries, Port Moresby, Territory of Papua and New Guinea.

MEMBERS OF TERRITORIAL FISHERIES SERVICES

Mr. M. Aylett	Fisheries Officer, Honiara, British Solomon Islands Protectorate.
Mr. J. Domard	Chef du Service de l'Élevage, des Industries Animales, de la Nacre et des Pêches, Papeete, Tahiti, French Polynesia.

Mr. K. J. Garnett	Chief Veterinary Officer, Department of Agriculture, Suva, Fiji.
Mr. W. A. Mackenzie	Director, Division of Sea Fisheries, Hollandia, Netherlands New Guinea.
Mr. Ronald Powell	Fisheries Officer, Rarotonga, Cook Islands.
Mr. Yutaka Sawamura	Fisheries Officer, Nuku'alofa, Tonga.
Mr. J. de Vries	Chief Inland Fisheries Officer, Hollandia, Netherlands New Guinea.
Mr. P. T. Wilson	Fisheries Management Biologist, Koror, Caroline Islands, U.S. Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

FAO-IPFC OBSERVER

Mr. J. A. Tubb	FAO Regional Fisheries Officer and Secretary to the Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council, FAO Regional Office, Bangkok, Thailand.
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SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

Dr. J. Barrau	Executive Officer for Economic Development.
Mr. L. C. Devambe	Assistant Fisheries Officer.
Mr. R. H. Boyan	Co-operatives Specialist.

The Secretary-General of the South Pacific Commission, Mr. T. R. Smith (extreme left), addressing the opening meeting.

the pearl oyster and other shellfish, even with training in boat building and maintenance for the benefit of native fishermen, and with a host of smaller enquiries."

Speaking of the purpose of the meeting, Mr. Smith said that the South Pacific Commission, at its session last October, had requested the Fisheries Technical Meeting to study the Commission's activities in the fisheries field and to make recommendations on its future programme, taking into consideration:

- (i) the progress already made since 1952;
- (ii) the organization by some territories of their own fisheries departments;
- (iii) the interest shown recently by some territories in the development of commercial fisheries in the area; and
- (iv) the question of technical training in the fisheries field.

"While we ask for recommendations for the benefit of the Commission," he concluded, "we hope also that your recommendations will give valuable guidance to territorial governments in the South Pacific area and to the many thousands of people on many islands who must catch fish to live."

Past Progress Reviewed

The main objective laid down for the Commission's fisheries programme by the SPC Fisheries Conference held in Nouméa in 1952 was the development and better use of the fish resources of the region. In reviewing the progress made, the meeting recorded its high appreciation of the work of the Commission's first fisheries officer, the late Mr. H. van Pel. During his seven years of service until his retirement in June 1961, he visited every territory in the

The Charles H. Gilbert, research vessel of the United States Fish and Wild Life Service, called at Noumea during the meeting, and was inspected by participants. Below right: Mr. W. A. Mackenzie (centre) and M. Louis Devambaz (right) in the chart room with First Officer Howard Kamaau.



South Pacific, studying and advising on the development of its fisheries.

In reviewing other progress made in the region in the past ten years, the meeting noted that industrial tuna fisheries had been established at Pago Pago, American Samoa, and at Santo in the New Hebrides. Fisheries co-operatives had been formed and were operating successfully in several territories, including the Solomon Islands, New Caledonia and the United States Trust

Territory, while new or improved fish markets and shore facilities had been provided in the Solomons, New Caledonia, Fiji, Netherlands New Guinea, Papua and New Guinea, and the United States Trust Territory. As well, fisheries departments had been established in French Polynesia, Tonga, Cook Islands, British Solomon Islands, Netherlands New Guinea, Papua and New Guinea, and the United States Trust Territory.

(continued on page 21)

Captain Robert Lee (right) discusses the ship's longlining gear with Mr. J. de Vries of Netherlands New Guinea.



ing materials store, agricultural maintenance workshop, woodwork and machine shop, carpentry and joinery workshop, five houses for the school staff, and the first of four dormitory blocks which will each accommodate 115 pupils. Nearing completion is a new dining hall and kitchen block designed to feed 480 pupils at one sitting. The cost has been nearly £65,000, which has all gone on building materials. Labour costs have been negligible.

The main block for which the British grant has been made will include thirteen classrooms, three science laboratories, drawing room, arts and crafts room, library, offices and staff room. The block will be constructed by the boys themselves under the supervision of a Public Works Department officer who has been seconded to the school staff.

Much of the food consumed by the pupils of the Ratu Kadavulevu School is grown on the school farm by boys taking the agricultural course.



Students enjoying a meal. Their average age is about fifteen years.

SPC Fisheries Programme Re-Shaped

(continued from page 19)

The urgent need for extensive research into the fisheries resources of the South Pacific, and for the assembly of economic information concerning them, was stressed. Short-term research is needed in individual territories, directed towards early economic benefits. As well, research is needed to maintain subsistence resources for local populations, and also long-term research to close the main gaps in scientific knowledge and to provide information on which long-range planning can be based.

The meeting considered that the Commission's rôle in such a programme would be:

- (i) to define, or assist in defining, research needs;
- (ii) to assist in meeting these needs either by providing direct financial or technical assistance, or in obtaining such assistance from other agencies;
- (iii) to take the initiative in fostering the interest of international agencies or research organizations as well as of the governments and territorial administrations concerned in this research.

The meeting considered that while reef stocks are invariably limited, the stocks of deep-water fish could be exploited to a much greater degree than at present. More efficient fishing gear and methods were needed, together with biological research on the species concerned.

In considering special areas for re-

search, the meeting urged that urgent steps be taken to provide the means for research on the Spanish mackerel and the big-eyed scad. The meeting also stressed the need for further information concerning the two groups of tuna—those forming surface schools and the deep-swimming varieties upon which the flag-line fishing industry depends. A study of bait resources was needed in connection with the exploitation of surface schools.

A proposal was also made that a research institute be set up in the region to study the improvement and control of fishery resources of coral reef, a main source of food for many islands populations.

Shell Resources Of The Region

In reviewing ways of expanding shell resources in the region, the meeting stressed the need for enlisting the help of overseas experts in developing breeding techniques for pearlshell. It also considered that while present prices for trochus no longer ensured reasonable returns, the steady demand for green snail shell warranted further attention being paid to the development of this fishery.

It was also felt that, particularly in the more isolated islands and atolls, small cash incomes for the local populations might be developed through the marketing of a number of minor items such as coral specimens, sea shells (both complete and carved), carved or polished trochus, and similar products. The meeting noted the recent marked increase in the number of amateur shell collectors, and the growth, particularly in Europe

and America, of small businesses dealing in shells. The Commission was requested to seek information on these markets.

Handling And Processing Of Fish

The meeting studied the various problems encountered in the handling and processing of catches in the three major types of fishery—subsistence, commercial and industrial. Subsistence fishermen ordinarily catch fish for their own consumption, or for barter, and normally it is consumed fresh. Problems encountered in the commercial fisheries in the region include the cleaning and icing of fish and its transport to markets, the provision of ice for fishing boats, and, in remote areas, the preservation of fish by converting it into fish meal or flakes. Fish for industrial markets are either frozen or processed for export, and here as well facilities are largely lacking in the region.

Design And Construction Of Fishing Boats

The meeting suggested that the assistance of FAO naval architects could be sought in the solving of basic problems in the design and construction of fishing boats for the Pacific. It was also emphasized that there was need for a careful study of the widely-varying fishing conditions throughout the region.

The meeting stressed that, under present conditions, mechanization of traditional fishing craft was the quickest, most practical way of increasing catches, and urged the Commission to publish as much information as possible on the subject.