

PAPUA NEW GUINEA NATIONAL FISHERIES REPORT

The major development in 1995 was the implementation of The Fisheries Act 1994 after the adoption of the Fisheries Regulations, concurrently with the development of the domestic fishing industry.

Firstly, the licensing system was modified. Distant water fishing license periods were increased from two months to 12 months, and domestic license period from twelve months to five years.

Secondly, as a result of the above, investment in the tuna fishing industry started. In Port Moresby two small longline vessels commenced fishing in the second half of 1995 and at about the same time a small Australian vessel was bought by a company in Wewak. The SPC assisted pilot tuna longline project in East New Britain was privatised and has continued operation since 1993.

In purse seining, two purse seine vessels with Taiwanese interests, were registered and flagged in Papua New Guinea. These two vessels fished in 1995, taking all their catches to overseas ports. They also fished in Federated States of Micronesia for much of the time.

In April 1995, the Papua New Guinea Government issued a gazettal notice prohibiting longline licenses to be issued to foreign flagged vessels. However, despite this policy, many Taiwanese owned foreign vessels continued to fish until July 1996, when their licenses were cancelled.

Fleet structure

A number of licenses issued in 1995 were as set out below:

Purse seine

<u>Distant water fishing vessels (exclusively in PNG)</u>	<u>Numbers</u>
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Philippines	11
Taiwan	42
Korea	29
Vanuatu	2

<u>Domestic vessels</u>	<u>Numbers</u>
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Niugini Fishing Company	2
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Longline

Since April 1995, only Papua New Guinea longline vessels were licensed to fish, however, some Taiwanese vessels (greater than 30) continued to fish.

Catch statistics

All log sheets and landing data have been sent to SPC as during the year there been no statistical analysis done in-country. Additionally, with the push to improve statistical coverage, many log sheets are still being received in 1996.

Markets

Purse seine catches are taken directly to overseas markets including the Philippines, Thailand, and Korea.

Longline catches main market for premium fish is Japan. Much of the by-catch is sent to Australia, with some sold on the domestic market.

Onshore development

In 1995, only one company had any development on shore. This company used its facilities that were set up to process their prawn catches from their prawn trawlers. The pilot project in East New Britain used the facilities set up for coastal fisheries catches. All other vessels pack their catches on board which are then loaded on planes. The Taiwanese fleet were freezer vessels and catches sent directly to overseas markets.

Future development

By January 1996, a 100 tonne per day tuna cannery will open in Madang. To supply the cannery, 50 licenses will be issued to the company building the cannery. The principal investors are the RD Fisheries Industry of General Santos in the Philippines. The company has indicated that it will purchase 25 mt of tuna from local vessels.

In the longline fishery, the number of interests and vessels will increase in 1996 as a result of an Asian Development Bank loan the Government is negotiating for the fishing industry. This loan will be available to private fishing companies and will be administered by the Rural Development Bank.

This year, the National Fisheries Authority commenced its National Observer Programme with technical assistance from FFA and SPC. SPC also provided financial assistance to set up the Port Sampling Programme. An Observer Training Course was held in Kavieng where 29 observers graduated. These observers are able to work on the Regional Observer Programme run by FFA as well as on the National Observer Programme. Currently there are 11 observers out at sea on Papua New Guinea, Taiwan, Korea, and Philippine vessels.