

SPC
639.2099

REG
1996
L1

SPC/Fisheries 26/Information Paper 13
29 July 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

TWENTY-SIXTH REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING ON FISHERIES (Noumea, New Caledonia, 5 - 9 August 1996)

FISHERIES TRAINING SECTION (Paper prepared by the Secretariat)

Background

The South Pacific Commission's first major training exercise was a three-month course for fisheries officers, held in Noumea in 1956. Since that time, the Commission has been more or less continuously involved in providing training to the fisheries sector, particularly at a vocational level. In recognition of the need for a dedicated project to provide broad-ranging training assistance to member countries, the Regional Fisheries Training Project (RFTP) was established in 1985 as an umbrella project to co-ordinate all SPC fisheries training activities and to act as a vehicle for the organisation of specialised training courses in subject fields not generally available within the region. In response to the recommendations of the 1991 Study of Human Resource Development Planning in the fisheries sector of 16 SPC member countries, the overall objectives and strategies of the RFTP were reviewed and redefined during 1992. A four year workplan, commencing in 1993, was subsequently developed to guide RFTP activities. As part of a general re-organisation of the Commission's Coastal Fisheries Programme, the RFTP was re-titled Fisheries Training Section in 1993.

The objectives of the Fisheries Training Section can be summarised as :

Co-ordination of Fisheries Training

Act as a vehicle for enhancing the transfer of fisheries-related skills and knowledge to Pacific Island nationals by co-ordinating fisheries training opportunities and by promoting the exchange of relevant information on fisheries training;

Training and Manpower Planning

Assist Pacific Island countries to more effectively plan and implement national manpower development and training programmes in the fisheries sector, and to make best use of available training opportunities;

Training Implementation

Develop training programmes in areas where existing training opportunities do not fully satisfy Pacific Island Country requirements, in particular vocational areas not addressed by established training programmes, and non-formal or hands-on training for individuals who may not have extensive educational backgrounds.

General

The Section comprises three full-time staff: the Fisheries Education and Training Adviser (FETA); the Fisheries Training Officer (FTO); and a Project Assistant (PA/FTS). An additional position, the Fisheries Information and Training Associate (FITA), is shared with the Fisheries Information Section. This trainee position was created to enable young Pacific Island fisheries officers working in the area of fisheries training or information to be exposed for one year to the work carried out by the Commission's Coastal Fisheries Programme. Henry Yule, librarian at the National Fisheries Authority of Papua New Guinea, held the FITA post from February 1995 to February 1996.

The positions of FETA and PA/FTS are currently funded by the Government of Australia, while the positions of FTO and FITA are funded by the Government of France. In addition, specific training initiatives are financed from other sources including the Government of Canada, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Commonwealth Foundation, the European Community, the Government of New Zealand, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank.

Early in 1995, both the Fisheries Education and Training Adviser and the Project Assistant left the Section, the former to take up a post as Head of the New Zealand School of Fisheries and the latter to take up a position as Personal Assistant to the Commission's Director of Services. The FETA position was vacant until early May when the post was filled by former FTO, Michel Blanc. Consequently, the FTO post became vacant, and was advertised in May 1995. The position was filled in November 1995 by Magnus Bergstrom, the former director of the Micronesian Maritime and Fisheries Academy (MMFA) in Yap. The new Project Assistant started to work with the Section in February 1995, but in June she departed to fill a position in the Commission's Publications Section. Christine Briffa replaced her at the end of June 1995.

REPORT ON SECTION ACTIVITIES (March 1994 to July 1996)

1. FIRST OBJECTIVE: Co-ordination of Fisheries Training

Fisheries Training Directory

The Fisheries Training Directory lists training opportunities available to the fisheries sector of Pacific Island countries. The document was completed in March 1993 and has subsequently been circulated to more than 220 fisheries contacts in the region. The Directory is available in hard copy and on database (CDS/ISIS software). During the first half of 1995, information updates have been received from nearly 80 per cent of the institutions listed in the Directory. A revised version of the Directory was published and distributed in August 1996.

Special Interest Group Bulletin

The SPC Coastal Fisheries Programme, through the Fisheries Information Section (FIS), has popularised the Special Interest Group (SIG) concept as a means of linking individuals, groups, and institutions with similar interest areas. Following the recommendations of the 1991 Human Resource Development Survey, the Section proposed and established a Special Interest Group in fisheries education and training. Four bulletins have been published during the reporting period with circulation exceeding 300 copies.

Pacific Island Qualified Fishing Deckhand Certification Programme

In September 1994, the Section organised a regional workshop on fishing vessel crew certification in Suva, Fiji. The workshop recommendations were subsequently compiled in a report and circulated to more than 400 fisheries contacts in the region. The workshop recommendations can be summarised as follows:

- a regional standard structure for fishing vessel crew certification should be adopted;
- fishing vessel crew certification should be based on established international and regional codes;
- the basic qualification in such a structure should be at deckhand level;
- the initial focus for implementing such a structure should be a Pacific Island Qualified Fishing Deckhand (PIQFD) certificate;
- the Forum Secretariat, the South Pacific Commission and the Forum Fisheries Agency should cooperate in the formation and funding of a body which will co-ordinate the development of a regional structure for the certification of fishing vessel crews;
- the co-ordinating body should undertake the collection and dissemination of information and the development and distribution of a teaching resource training package in line with the syllabus proposed for the PIQFD certificate;
- pilot courses should be conducted for the purpose of course evaluation and determination of training resource and equipment needs and associated costs.

During the reporting period, the Section has followed the workshop recommendations by co-ordinating the production of a teaching resource package in support of the PIQFD course syllabus. A team of consultants from the New Zealand School of Fisheries was identified in 1995 and the production of resource materials is close to completion. The first meeting of the co-ordinating group was held in April 1996, at the Forum Secretariat in Suva, Fiji and its purpose was to review the draft PIQFD teaching resource materials and plan future activities in relation to the PIQFD programme. In February-April 1995, the Section also supported the PIQFD course run by the Vanuatu Fisheries Training Centre through the organisation and funding of a six-week training attachment for a fisheries instructor of the Solomon Islands School of Marine and Fisheries Studies. The course in Vanuatu was the first in the region to follow the PIQFD syllabus adopted by the 1994 workshop. The Section's activities in the area of fishing vessel crew certification are funded by UNDP under the FFA/SPC Regional Fisheries Support and National Capacity Building (RFSNCB) Project.

2. SECOND OBJECTIVE: Training and Manpower Planning

Human Resource Development Planning

During the last three years, the Section has assisted with the production of a HRD plan for the Division of Fish and Wildlife of the Northern Marianas and the fisheries sector Tonga, Western Samoa, Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia. These plans consist of a comprehensive manpower needs analysis, and recommendations to match education and training opportunities with future manpower requirements. The recent work carried out in FSM (June 1996) also included a workshop on the implementation of a fisheries manpower development programme. Planning and Development of Business Management Training.

In 1994, the Section developed a training programme in fishing business management under the UNDP-sponsored FFA/SPC RFSNCB project. The training programme is summarised as follows:

A regional workshop on business management for trainers of small-boat operators. The objectives of the workshop are to develop country-specific strategies for improving fishers' business management skills, and at the same time equip extension officers with the necessary tools to undertake in-country training programmes (with specific external assistance as necessary).

A regional course for managers or aspirant managers of private and public fisheries business operations. The three-week course would be offered in conjunction with the Australian Maritime College (AMC). It is envisaged that the course would include a needs assessment module to provide a basis for in-country follow-up and to document additional skill requirements, both for participants and for company or enterprise personnel.

The 'train-the-trainer' workshop was conducted in Santo, Vanuatu, in March 1996 (see below) whereas the enterprise management course will be run during the first quarter of 1997. Section's initiatives in the area of business management are funded by UNDP under the SPC/FFA RFSNCB project.

3. OBJECTIVE: Implementation of Training Programmes

SPC/Nelson Pacific Island Fisheries Officers Training Course

This course is run in collaboration with the New Zealand School of Fisheries at Nelson Polytechnic, Nelson, New Zealand. The course is divided into two main modules with the first of these being hosted in New Zealand. This module lasts 19 weeks and runs from February to June. It includes a wide range of practical skills training. The second module is run in July and involves five weeks of practical fishing during which participants can build on the technical and theoretical training of the Nelson module. The practical module has been held at several different Pacific Island locations and is hosted by national fisheries administrations. During the 1994-1996 period, three courses have been run for a total of 34 participants. The practical modules were hosted by New Caledonia (1994 and 1995) and Kiribati (1996). Since the course inception in 1979, 201 Pacific Island fisheries officer have been trained. Working Paper 6 seeks advice from member countries and territories on the future direction to be given to the course.

Workshops on the Handling and Grading of Sashimi Tuna

At the end of 1994, a proposal to utilise unspent funds from the ICOD-funded Post-harvest fisheries training project was submitted to the Government of Canada. This proposal received a favourable response and enabled Section staff to confirm a schedule for a regional workshop on the handling and grading of sashimi-grade tuna. The workshop has been jointly organised by the Post-harvest and Training Sections with Section staff preparing resource materials, selecting participants and making arrangements for tutors and general logistics. The one-week workshop was held in Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia, in August 1995 and implemented by SPC Post-harvest Fisheries Adviser. Following the regional workshop, the Section was requested to implement an in-country workshop for Papua New Guinea in December 1995 and French Polynesia in May 1996. These two-day workshops were conducted by Ken Harada, Sydney Fish Market's Quality Control Officer, with teaching inputs from Section staff. The workshop lectures comprised an introduction to the Japanese sashimi markets, tuna biology and physiology, on-board tuna handling, quality assessment, on-shore handling and packing. 'Hands-on' demonstrations of tuna handling and grading were carried out on the second day of the workshops. Some resource materials (video and manual on the on-board handling of sashimi-grade tunas) have been produced by the Section to support these training initiatives. The development of domestic tuna longline operations in the region will coincide with an increasing training need in the area of tuna handling and grading.

Regional Workshop on Business Management for Trainers of Small-boat Operators

A regional workshop on small-fishing business management was organised by the Section at the Vanuatu Fisheries Training Centre in Santo from March 18 to 26, 1996. The workshop was attended by 14 fisheries officers from 11 Pacific Island countries and territories namely Fiji, Kiribati, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea (3 trainees), Solomon Islands, Tonga (2 trainees), Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Western Samoa, and the Federated States of Micronesia. The purpose of the workshop was to equip the participants with the necessary skills and resource materials to develop and implement their in-country training programme on business management for small-boat operators. To achieve this, the workshop was operated in a participatory manner with learning outcomes being achieved through small-group discussions, role plays and daily learning reviews. The following topics were covered during the first part of the workshop: basic arithmetics, financial management of small-fishing business (accounting and banking principles, boat operation costs, feasibility studies, record keeping, use of a spreadsheet for commercial fishing operations), as well as extension and communication skills (role of the extension officer, how to get ideas accepted, one-to-one communication). The second part of the workshop focused on the development of resource materials with the SPC fishing log-book and teaching manual being reviewed and appraised by the participants. On the last day of the workshop, the trainees drafted an in-country training programme which, for most of them, will consist of a series of short courses targeting small-scale fishers or fisheries extension officers. Following the regional workshop, the course materials (fishing log-book and teaching manual) were finalised and printed by SPC before their distribution to the workshop participants and to all fisheries departments and training institutions in the region. In July, the participant from Solomon Islands ran his in-country workshop for the Fisheries Division extension officers. Follow-up in-country workshops in Niue, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and Tuvalu will also be implemented shortly. It is expected that most of the in-country programmes will have been conducted by the end of 1996.

FAD Fishing Skills and Flying-fish Fishing Workshops

During the past few years, in acknowledgment of countries' interest in promoting the efficient utilisation of near-shore pelagic resources, the Capture Section has devoted increasing effort to the development of Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) programmes in the region. Assistance to member countries and territories has primarily been in the area of FAD deployment but in 1994 the Training Section undertook to enhance fishers' skills in FAD utilisation. Section staff co-ordinated the delivery of several one-week FAD Fishing Skills workshops in Tonga (April 1994) and Wallis and Futuna (September 1994). A series of teaching modules covering the various aspects of FAD fishing skills was developed by the Section. By August 1996, four of these modules had been finalised and distributed ('Overall description of FADs', 'Safety at Sea and Small-boat FAD Fishing', 'Fish Handling and Chilling', and 'Financial Management of a Small Fishing Business').

While in Futuna, the limited availability of bait had been identified as a major constraint to the development of commercial trolling activities. In line with this, in November 1995, the Section carried out a one-week training programme on flying-fish fishing for the fishermen of Futuna and the staff of the local Fisheries Division. Fishing trials have indicated that a seasonal (October to March) flying-fish fishery could be set up for the supply of bait to the local fishers. Apart from training fishers in the use of the helmet/scoop-net gear, Section staff also demonstrated the rigging and the use of flying-fish bait for trolling. Following that workshop, a set of recommendations for the development of a commercial fishing sector was forwarded to the Futuna fisheries department.

Attachment and Short Course Training

As part of the Fisheries Programme's mandate to implement strategic training activities, the Section has undertaken to assist member countries and territories with subject-specific training for nominated individuals through attachments or short courses. During the reporting period, 11 training attachments were organised. Countries/territories that have benefited from these attachments are Palau, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, New Caledonia, Fiji, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

4. Additional Activities

Safety-at-Sea Public Awareness Campaign

Following a request from several member countries, the Section initiated, in November 1994, a campaign on safety at sea for small-boat operators with funding from Australia and France. The purpose of this project was to provide useful resource materials to fisheries administrations, training institutions and NGOs in order to assist with the promotion of a better awareness of small-boat safety-at-sea. The main message of the campaign is that attention to basic safety is not necessarily expensive or time-consuming and can be easily incorporated into the operation of small fishing vessels. Early in 1995, the Section produced a series of resource materials including the campaign logo, two checklists and one poster. The checklists were subsequently produced on tee-shirts, laminated cards, A4-size stickers and posters. By the end of July 1995, samples of these articles had been sent to the Section's fisheries contacts in the region with an invitation to order some more for in-country distribution. Earlier, in May 1995, a tutor's workshop guide ('Safety-at-sea and small-boat FAD fishing') had been distributed to fisheries departments and training institutions. The latest materials that have been dispatched consist of the English version of two videos ('Better Safe than Sorry' and 'Survival at sea — A Kiribati Tale') a fourth poster, the message of which focus on the cost of search-and-rescue operations ('Who pays the price when you get lost at sea') and an audio-tape programme to be broadcast by national radio stations and used during in-country training workshops. In August 1996, several thousands of the campaign's articles had been forwarded to over 300 fisheries contact and government ministries/departments and distribution was still ongoing.

Fisheries Training Videos

During the reporting period, the Post-harvest and Training Sections have initiated the filming of five training programmes utilising commercial video production companies. A sixth programme ('Survival at sea — A Kiribati tale') was purchased from an Australian production company and an interview with SPC Fisheries Programme Manager was filmed in June and appended to the programme. Dubbing and distribution of the Section's video 'On-board Handling of Sashimi-grade Tuna' was made in October 1995 (French version) and November 1995 (English version). This video production, funded by the Government of Canada, was used during the training workshops on sashimi-tuna handling recently organised by the Section in FSM, PNG and French Polynesia. The video was distributed to all fisheries administrations and training institutions and to most of commercial longline companies in the region. The English version of the two programmes 'Better Safe than Sorry' and 'Survival at sea - A Kiribati tale' were distributed in December 1995 to the contacts of the Section's campaign on safety at sea. At the end of 1995, contacts had been made with the TV station in New Caledonia (Radio-diffusion Television Française pour l'Outre-Mer — RFO) with the purpose of dubbing these two programmes in French.

Development of Marine and Fisheries Resource Materials

In a collaborative undertaking with the Commission's Capture Section, Training Section staff have produced a series of teaching modules to assist instructors with the delivery of FAD Fishing Skills workshops. Designed to provide guidelines in the presentation of both classroom and practical sessions, the modules cover the following topics: Overall description of FADs, Safety-at-Sea and small-boat FAD fishing, Fish handling and Chilling, Financial management of a small fishing business, Trolling around FADs, Vertical longlining around FADs, and Drop-stone fishing. Using a similar approach to that developed for the FAD Fishing Skills workshop modules, the Section co-ordinates the production of a set of resource materials in support of the PIQFD course syllabus. This work is undertaken on a consultancy basis and started in June 1995. The resource materials will include teaching modules with overheads for the instructors and hand-outs for the trainees. The package will assist fisheries training institutions in conducting PIQFD courses. The manual 'On-board handling of sashimi-grade tuna', that complements the video on the same topic, was distributed in July (French version) and August (English version). The Section also continues to be associated with the Public Marine Education (PME) programme based at the University of the South Pacific (USP). Section staff participated in the third meeting of the PME Advisory Group in October 1995 at USP. The meeting acknowledged the quality and potential usefulness of the safety-at-sea materials produced by the Section and decided that, in order to facilitate their distribution to schools, future in-country workshops run by the PME will introduce and demonstrate the use of the materials to school teachers.
