

SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

TWENTY-FIFTH REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING ON FISHERIES
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**FISHERIES COOPERATION ACTIVITIES BY THE OFCF IN THE CENTRAL
WESTERN PACIFIC**

Fisheries Cooperation activities by the OFCF in the Central Western Pacific

1 . Objectives of the OFCF

The Overseas Fishery Cooperation Foundation (OFCF) is a non-profit organization established on June 2, 1973. Its budget comes from the Japanese government. The main objective of the OFCF is to promote mutual understandings between Japan and the coastal states through various types of fisheries cooperation activities. Further, when the Japanese fishing industry carries out cooperation activities in other countries, the OFCF will provide various types of support to the industry, and indirectly contribute for development of the fisheries in the recipient countries.

2 . Activities of the OFCF

The OFCF implements the following programs.

(1) Technical cooperation to develop the fisheries in the recipient countries.

This includes:

- 1) Conducting comprehensive researches to develop the coastal fisheries
- 2) Dispatching experts of fisheries to the coastal states
- 3) Providing financial assistance to fishermen with small to medium size operations
- 4) Provident trainings on fisheries

(2) Promotion of personnel exchange in the field of fisheries

(3) Project finding research

(4) Loans for Japanese fishery company and organization

(5) Trainings and registration of fisheries experts

(6) Providing information on fisheries

3 . The current cooperation activities in the Central Western Pacific

There are 4 kinds of on-going cooperation activities in the Central Western Pacific.

(1) Research projects to develop fisheries in the coastal states

a) The Solomon Islands

This project started in 1989 based on the Memorandum of Agreement agreed among the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Solomon Islands, the Malaita state government and the OFCF. We placed the operation center in Auki and 7 satellites in other areas of the Malaita island, and are now working on the project.

4 experts dispatched by the OFCF has organized fisheries co-operatives in each area. They are teaching the fishermen who participate in the project how to manage fishing boats and gears by actually letting these fishermen manage the boats and gears supplied by the OFCF. They also are teaching the fishing technique, safe operation, how to take care of the engines of the boats, and how to maintain the freshness of the catch. At the same time, they have inspected and improved the condition of the existing fisheries facilities.

After landed at the Auki center, the catch is sold at the market in Honiara, and the experts are giving instructions to establish the whole procedure. Currently at some of the satellites, fisheries co-operatives are managing the whole procedure of catching, transporting and selling of the fish by themselves.

b) The Federated States of Micronesia

The project was started in December 1990 in Chuuk state. It has three objectives; to operate fishing for round scads and squids on the experimental basis in the Truk lagoon; to utilize the catch (squid and scads) as baits for tuna longline fishing; and to conduct research on distribution and sales of fresh fish.

By the experimental operation by a small fishing boat, we have found out that the squid resource is very limited in the area, but confirmed that pelagic fish resource such as scads does exist and identified the suitable fishing method. The catch gets frozen, and is supplied as baits for longliners owned by the state of Chuuk or by other states, or sold at the local markets.

This year we have started a more comprehensive research on pelagic fish resource to see if this type of fishing operation is feasible as an industry on the long term basis.

c) The Republic of Palau

The project was started in December 1992 to develop the coastal fisheries in Palau. The operation base is located in Koror, and 2 sub-bases are located in Ngarchelong and Melekeok. The experts dispatched by the OFCF are visiting these bases on the periodical basis and conducting research on development of outer reef fisheries (Payao (FAD) fishing, bottom fish fishing). They are also helping the local people to improve the existing methods of freshness maintenance, transportation, processing and sales. Since April 1994, an engineer will be dispatched to the project and the instruction on maintenance and repair of the related equipments is going to be executed.

d) The Republic of Fiji

This Project initiated in 1992 and is to be implemented for two years. The objective of the project is to assist executing the improvement of Quality Control of the catches in small-scale commercial fisheries in Fiji; i.e., to improve the method of post-harvest handling of the catch, the existing preservation equipments, and strengthen their use. The location of the project is based in Lautoka, with a branch located in Suva.

e) Tuvalu

OFCF and Government of Tuvalu have just agreed to implement a project in February 1994. The objective of the project is to provide technical cooperation and assistance in the development of small scale commercial coastal fisheries. It includes advise on the management, repair and maintenance of fishing boats, freezers, etc. The advise and instruction on improvement of fishing gears, fishing method, and fish handling techniques are also provided. The feasibility study for marketing of the catch is expected being implemented through the marketing surveys.

(2) Training program

a) Accepting trainees

The OFCF receives trainees from other countries based on the request of these countries, and provides various types of technical trainings in Japan. In order to respond to as many requests as possible, we have prepared many kinds of training courses, and the duration of training varies from 1.5 months to 1 year, depending on the contents of the course. "The South Pacific Fisheries Course" has been established particularly for the Southern Pacific nations.

b) Training in the coastal states

The Federated States of Micronesia is working particularly hard on promoting the longline fishing with its own fishing vessels. However, because there are very few people with the expertise in that area, it is critical to cultivate engineers in a very short time frame. In order to respond to such

need, in addition to receiving trainees from Micronesia to Japan, we have dispatched experts to the Micronesia Maritime and Fishery Academy in the Yap state and started training .

There are 2 courses available, one for longline fishing and the other for purse seine fishing. Each course accepts 10 trainees and lasts for 20 weeks. Three experts from Japan are giving trainings on the basic skill of tuna longline and purse seine fishings and are teaching the know-how of living as crew on the fishing boats.

(3) Repairing, reconstruction of the fisheries related facilities and technical transfer program

The objective of the program is to transfer minimum required practical techniques to the counterpart of each recipient country in order to secure maintenance and reparation of fishery related facilities which are reduced to be out of function, due to lack of maintenance, damages from natural calamities, etc. We started this program in 1990. During the fiscal year of 1993, we have repaired and reconstructed facilities in the following 3 countries, and provided off-job trainings.

a) The Federated States of Micronesia

- One fishing boat in Chuuk state, ice plants and refrigerators in 2 small islands.
- An ice plants and a refrigerator in Teketik in Pohnpei state.
- One fishing boat in Yap state, an ice plant in a small island.
- One fishing boat and a processing facility in Kosrae state.

b) The Republic of Palau

- PFA quay facility and three refrigerators

c) The Solomon Islands

- A research vessel owned by the Fisheries agency
- Rata fisheries center (water supply facility), Tatamba fisheries center (generator)

(4) Dispatch of fisheries advisors

In response to the request from the South Pacific nations and the regional authority, we dispatch fisheries advisors to support the fisheries development in the area and to strengthen the good relationship with the area. Currently, Mr. Maeda, is now stationed at FFA and investigating the tuna fisheries and giving advises.

4. Conclusion

The OFCF is always concerned whether or not our cooperative activities meet the needs the recipient countries, whether such activities are contributing for the fisheries development of those countries. We review thoroughly the projects implemented in the past, with advises from outside sources, to improve the on-going and future projects. For example, we are on the process developing the educational training soft package for personal computer on fishing boat engines and refrigerating system.

Our office in Suva, Fiji is working to help the smooth operation of each project, while collecting fisheries related information. It would be very helpful if you could provide us with your evaluations and opinions on the OFCF so that we can make the future projects even more effective.

The OFCF hopes that the mutual understanding between Japan and the recipient country will be strengthened and that the fisheries in both countries will be promoted through its cooperative activities.