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SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

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

COUNTRY STATEMENT

WALLIS AND FUTUNA

In order to diversify fishing techniques and improve yields, a FAD (Fish aggregation device) project was carried out in Wallis and Futuna in 1992 with the technical assistance of the SPC.

The project's effectiveness was demonstrated by an increase in production and the appearance on the market place of high-quality fish, such as mahi-mahi (dolphinfish), yellowfin tuna and marlin.

The first three FADs were moored on 10 November 1992 in Futuna and 11 November 1992 in Wallis.

Two of those FADs were replaced in July 1994. FAD no. 1 in Wallis was moored on the morning of 28 July 1995 by *La Glorieuse*, a French naval vessel. At 5.30 pm the same day, FAD no. 3 in Futuna was released.

FAD no. 2 in Wallis broke away from its mooring at the time the two others were being moored, so a FAD was immediately brought to Wallis to replace it.

At 4.30 pm on 11 August 1995, during a visit to the Territory by the French naval vessel, *La Place*, a third FAD was moored south of Honikulu.

Given the limited useable surface area in Futuna and the depletion of the Wallis lagoon due to a heavy concentration of activity using many different types of fishing techniques, the Fishery Service has tried to encourage fishermen to fish outside the lagoon.

However, the snapper stock is a fragile resource which is likely to be endangered if fishing efforts increase near the outer reef slope.

For the near future, it would be advisable to promote fishing of pelagic species associated with the surface waters around FADs or even farther out.

For all these reasons, the FAD programme in Wallis and Futuna must be maintained and expanded.

Julian Dashwood and Michel Blanc held a workshop to demonstrate techniques for netting flying fish from 22 to 27 November 1995 in Futuna.

The results of this workshop gave a glimpse into the interesting possibilities for harvest of this species which is considered the best bait for trolling around FADs.

Currently the Territorial Fisheries Service has on reserve five FADs, purchased with revenues from the French-Japanese access agreement.

No efforts have been made in Wallis or Futuna to promote marine resources.

Projects proposed by the Fisheries Service as part of the development plan between the Territory and the French government were not accepted.

A study mission to Tonga had been proposed to the Government in order to visit the Tongan mullet resource management programme.

Given the drop in lagoon fish catches, the Fisheries Service brought up the possibility of implementing a similar programme in the Territory following the study mission.

As part of the Fisheries Service's work, there are plans to undertake studies of larger-scale exploitation in addition to FADs.

These studies will concentrate on port and land-based infrastructures, boat types and ocean safety.
