

22/15/98
SPC/2nd Pacific Community Fish. Mgmt. Workshop/BP 2
6 October 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Not for loan

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SECOND PACIFIC COMMUNITY
FISHERIES MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

(Noumea, New Caledonia, 12-16 October 1998)

**INTRODUCING STREAMS TO THE PACIFIC ISLAND
FISHERIES OFFICERS COURSE — SOME PRACTICAL PERSPECTIVES**

By the New Zealand School of Fisheries
Nelson Polytechnic

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INTRODUCING STREAMS TO THE PACIFIC ISLAND FISHERIES OFFICERS COURSE – SOME PRACTICAL PERSPECTIVES

The New Zealand School of Fisheries has been working with SPC to assess the feasibility of introducing streams into the 1999 course as per the meeting discussion paper.

Discussions within the School of Fisheries suggest two possible areas of concern in regard to the implementation of the proposed course.

Costs

The format of the traditional course allows for some 180 hours of time in which two tutors are used to teach the class. This is either when the class is divided into two groups or when two tutors are required to deliver a specific part of the course (ie: netloft).

Under the new model there will be some 240 hours of time in which two tutors are required for course delivery. This includes the offering of two streams for 6 weeks (210 hours) and the use of two tutors for 30 hours of extension and communications skills.

While the School of Fisheries will work to ensure that efficient allocation of tutor times minimises the additional use of two tutors, it is likely that the new course format will require between 40 – 60 hours of tutor time.

The costing models applied by the Polytechnic suggests there will be an additional cost to the new course to cover extra teaching hours of between NZ\$ 3600 and NZ\$ 6200.

Course Development

The syllabus and associated delivery material for the traditional course has been developed by the School and SPC over a 20 year period. The inclusion of new modules in resource management, ecology, research strategies and survey techniques, additional computer studies, office management and aquaculture requires the development and approval of appropriate syllabi and the preparation of associated class material and teaching notes.

While the new subjects are not new to the School of Fisheries, the development of syllabi and preparation of material for any new course is a time consuming (and potentially expensive) process.

A conservative estimate suggests around 20 hours per module will be required to develop the syllabus and prepare resource material for delivery.

This suggests at least 120 hours of tutor time will be required to prepare the new modules for delivery.

To date, the course syllabus has been the responsibility of SPC with the School of Fisheries having responsibility for the preparation of resource materials for teaching purposes. If this model is suggested for the new modules, the School will be required to commit almost 100 hours of tutor time to course development.

The likely cost of course development, if undertaken by the School of Fisheries, is around NZ\$ 8000. This cost can be charged on a 1 off basis or offset over a 2 – 4 year period with an annual charge.

School Perspective

The School of Fisheries remains committed to working with SPC and member countries to ensure the ongoing relevance of the Fisheries Officers Course. School staff assisted in the formulation of the two streams as a trial for the 1999 course and are keen to implement the suggested programme.

The School will ensure that additional costs are kept to a minimum and cost efficiencies are achieved where possible with the introduction of the new programme. However, member countries should be made aware that there will be a cost implication with the proposed course change.