



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

Organisation
des
Nations
Unies
pour
l'alimentation
et
l'agriculture

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

COORDINATING WORKING PARTY ON FISHERY STATISTICS

Nineteenth Session

Noumea, New Caledonia, 10-13 July 2001-06-11

AGENCY REPORT

Author: FFA

Introduction

Several inter-linking databases have been developed at the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) Secretariat under the Corporate Data Resources model to support the conservation and management of tuna resources in the western and central Pacific:

- Regional Register;
- People and Organisations;
- Observer Reports;
- U.S. Treaty;
- Violations and Prosecutions;
- Fisheries Agreements and Licences; and
- FFA member countries' Vessel Monitoring System (FFA VMS).

Regional Register

The Regional Register of Foreign Fishing Vessels (Regional Register) is a compliance mechanism. It constitutes a database of details for foreign fishing vessels that are able to apply for licenses to fish in the EEZs of FFA member countries. The database holds information on vessel owners, operators, masters, and physical characteristics of the vessels and their fishing gear.

The intention behind the Regional Register is to shift some of the responsibility for ensuring compliance to the flag State or fishing association. The fundamental requirement of the Register, administered by the FFA Director, is that before any vessel may be licensed to fish in the EEZs of FFA member countries, it must be in "Good Standing" on the Regional Register. Good Standing is a status that is automatically conferred on a vessel upon registration. The status may be suspended in certain circumstances, such as where a vessel has committed a serious fisheries offence. Following suspension, good standing may be reinstated upon satisfactorily completing corrective action to the satisfaction of the country requesting suspension.

At the time of writing of this paper there were 1,200 vessels of all types in good standing on the Regional Register. This is expected to increase to approximately 1,300 vessels by the end of the Regional Registration period on 31 August 2001. A monthly listing of certain vessel characteristics is distributed to surveillance contacts in FFA member countries and to regional fisheries surveillance agencies.

People and organisations

The People and Organisations Database contains details of all individuals and organisations that the FFA Secretariat has dealings with, including fishing vessel captains, fishing masters and contact persons in FFA member countries. It is linked to Regional Register and other databases at the FFA Secretariat.

Observer reports

The Observer Reports Database contains details of all trip reports provided by observers on US Treaty purse seine vessels. Over 20 per cent of all fishing trips undertaken by U.S. purse seiners operating under the treaty have a qualified observer on board.

Vessel activity and catch

The Vessel Activity and Catch Database contains data on fish catches by U.S. Treaty purse seiners. It is mainly used for the allocation of funds provided to Pacific Island Parties under the U.S. Treaty, 85 per cent of which is allocated according to the EEZ in which the catch was taken.

Violations and prosecutions

The Violations and Prosecutions Database contains details of alleged violations of fisheries laws reported by FFA member countries, aerial surveillance authorities and other sources. It is linked to court transcripts of those cases heard in a court of law.

Fisheries agreements and licences

The Fisheries Agreements and Licences Database contains details of fishing vessels licensed in FFA member countries. Because licensing of vessels is a sovereign issue, the data for the database is provided by Licensing Officers in FFA member countries. There is limited information sharing on licences between the FFA member countries.

FFA member countries' vessel monitoring system (FFA VMS)

The FFA VMS Database contains information on the position, speed and direction of fishing vessels that are in good standing on the FFA member countries' VMS Register. Using internet or International Direct Dial, FFA member countries are able to draw down information from the FFA VMS hub-site computer of the position, speed and direction of vessels that are fishing in their respective EEZs. This information is then displayed on a computer monitor against a background of the FFA member country's defined geographical areas. To ensure that VMS data is handled securely, the FFA Secretariat has implemented a comprehensive security system that includes encryption of VMS information to and from the FFA VMS hub-site and FFA member countries.

The FFA VMS is not currently capable of transmitting fish catch data, though it has been designed with the flexibility to handle catch data transmission as an enhancement to the baseline

system. This is consistent with the FFA member countries' requirement to address the issue of illegal fishing in the first instance.