

THE INDO-PACIFIC FISHERIES COUNCIL

By A. W. Anderson*

The need for cooperation and coordination in fisheries research concerned with the resources of the sea has been recognized for years. A number of European nations have long been organized in an association active particularly in the Northwest Atlantic and known as the Permanent International Council for the Exploration of the Sea. Canada and the United States have cooperated somewhat similarly on a bilateral basis in establishing an International Fisheries Commission and a Pacific Salmon Fisheries Commission, each with regulatory powers, to preserve their halibut and salmon resources on the Pacific Coast.



Proposals to establish fishery councils patterned after the Permanent Council for the Exploration of the Sea were discussed at the First Session of the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization at Quebec in 1945. In 1946, at the Second Session in Copenhagen, the report of the Standing Advisory Committee on Fisheries recommending the establishment of such councils was approved. Early in 1947, the South East Asia Fisheries Conference at Singapore, under the auspices of the United Kingdom Special Commissioner in South East Asia, resolved that the Food and Agriculture Organization be requested to establish a Fisheries Council in that area. Later in 1947, the Director-General of FAO notified Member Nations of his intention to place the matter of initiating Fisheries Councils on the agenda for the Third Session of the Conference of FAO at Geneva. A suggested draft of a constitution for a Regional Council was circulated, and, in September 1947 at Geneva, the Conference resolved

"that FAO should take action to initiate the formation of Regional Councils for the scientific exploration of the sea in the parts of the world not now actively served by similar bodies, giving primary consideration to the following areas:

North Western Atlantic
 South Western Pacific and Indian Ocean
 Mediterranean Sea and contiguous waters
 North Eastern Pacific
 South Eastern Pacific
 Western South Atlantic
 Eastern South Atlantic and Indian Ocean

"This Commission is of the opinion that the boundaries of these areas, and the constitutions of the councils, should be left open for discussion and determination by the nations concerned."

All Member Governments of FAO were notified in November 1947 of the proposal to establish a Regional Council for the Study of the Sea in the South Western Pacific and Indian Oceans. In January 1948, invitations to convene in Baguio, Philippines, for this purpose from February 23 to 28, 1948, were sent to the Governments of Australia, Burma, China, France, India, Netherlands, Pakistan, Philip-

* Chief, Branch of Commercial Fisheries, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C., U.S. Delegate to the FAO Regional Meeting to Consider the Formation of a Regional Council for the Study of the Sea, Baguio, Philippines, February 23-28, 1948.

NOTE: Adapted from article of same title by A. W. Anderson in The Department of State Bulletin dated July 4, 1948.

pires, Siam, United Kingdom, and the United States. Invitations were also issued to UN, UNESCO, WHO, ILO, SCAP, and the Permanent International Council for the Exploration of the Sea.

At the Baguio Conference, delegates were present from Burma, China, France, India, Netherlands, Philippines, United Kingdom, and the United States. Observers were present from Italy, SCAP, and UNESCO. FAO was represented by the Regional Special Advisor, the Director and the Chief Biologist of the Fisheries Division, and the Regional Representative (Fisheries) from Singapore.

Nearly all the delegates, advisers, and observers were technical fisheries representatives of their Governments. A few were from allied fields while one United States representative was a member of two international fisheries commissions and an attorney well versed in international fisheries law.

The Fisheries Conference began with a Joint Opening with the Nutrition Conference which was meeting in Baguio at the same time, and terminated its work with a similar Joint Closing at which matters of mutual concern were discussed.

The Fisheries Conference organized promptly by electing officers and establishing seven committees. Dr. D. V. Villadolid, Director of Fisheries, Bureau of Fisheries, Manila, Republic of the Philippines, and Dr. L. G. M. Baas Becking, Director of the Botanical Gardens in Buitenzorg, Java, served ably as Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively. The Credentials Committee also was headed by Dr. Becking, the Steering Committee by U. Khin of Burma, and the Drafting Committee by Dr. S. L. Hora of India. The four continuing technical working committees had chairmen as follows: Biology, Dr. G. A. C. Herklots, United Kingdom; Hydrology, Dr. Becking; Taxonomy, Dr. Hora; and Technology, Dr. Villadolid.

The formal agenda of the Conference was limited, after some discussion, to the establishment of a Fisheries Council for the Indo-Pacific area and the development of the scientific program to be carried on by that Council. Consequently, the conference was able to concentrate upon these objectives and, within the relatively brief time allotted for its deliberations, to formulate an agreement for the establishment of the Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council and to evolve a comprehensive program of investigations to be undertaken by the Council during the next several years.

Development of the final document began with consideration of the draft constitution proposed by the FAO, the comments and suggestions in the opening statements of the various delegations, and the modified agreement submitted by the United States.

From these deliberations, an Agreement for the Establishment of the Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council emerged. The representatives of Burma, China, France, India, Netherlands, Philippines, United Kingdom, and the United States recommended to their respective Governments for consideration the acceptance of the Agreement.

The Agreement recognizes a "mutual interest in the development and proper utilization of the living aquatic resources of the Indo-Pacific Areas" and provides for the establishment of a Council with certain functions and duties in the Indo-Pacific areas. These functions and duties are:

1. To formulate the oceanographical, biological and other technical aspects of the problems of development and proper utilization of living aquatic resources.
2. To encourage and coordinate research and the application of improved methods in every day practice.
3. To assemble, publish or otherwise disseminate oceanographical, biological and other technical information relating to living aquatic resources.
4. To recommend to member Governments such national or cooperative research and development projects as may appear necessary or desirable to fill gaps in such knowledge.
5. To undertake, where appropriate, cooperative research and development projects directed to this end.
6. To propose, and where necessary to adopt, measures to bring about the standardization of scientific equipment, techniques and nomenclature.
7. To extend its good offices in assisting member Governments to secure essential materials and equipment.
8. To report upon such questions relating to oceanographical, biological and other technical problems as may be recommended to it by member Governments or by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other international, national or private organizations, with related interests.
9. To report annually to the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations upon its activities, for the information of the Conference; and to make such other reports to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on matters falling within the competence of the Council as may seem to it necessary and desirable.

Other articles in the Agreement provide that each Member Government shall be represented at Council meetings by a single delegate, that the seat of the Council shall be at the FAO Regional Office most conveniently situated in the Indo-Pacific areas, and that the FAO shall provide the Secretariat and appoint the Council's Secretary. The expenses of research or development projects are to be determined and paid by the Governments involved.

The Agreement is open to acceptance by the Governments represented at the Baguio Conference, by other Governments which are members of FAO, and by those Governments not members of FAO which meet certain conditions including approval by the Conference of the FAO and by two-thirds of the Members of the Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council. The Agreement shall enter into force upon the date of receipt of the fifth notification of acceptance. The United States reserved its position with regard to the Agreement entering into effect without referral to the next Conference of the FAO because certain provisions appeared to require further Conference approval.

In order that the scientific cooperation begun at Baguio might continue, it was resolved by the Fisheries Conference that the technical working committees on Biology, Hydrology, Taxonomy, and Technology should continue to function informally, with the assistance of the Fisheries Division of FAO, pending the entry into force of the Agreement.

The Committee on Biology recommended that the mode of approach to a program must be by way of determining the present status of knowledge and the programs under way in the area. It proposed as a first step the circularization of a questionnaire on these matters and an analysis of the replies.

The Committee on Hydrology envisaged a five-year program, involving, in the first year, the compilation of oceanographic data, drafting of a map of the principal producing regions, agreement on methods and procedures, appointment of an oceanographer on the staff of the FAO Fisheries Division, and compilation of a list of available research vessels which could be drawn upon for assistance.

For the second year, consideration of the establishment of an observational pattern based upon the knowledge accumulated is suggested. For the third, fourth, and fifth years, initiation of a coordinated program of hydrographic observations was proposed.

The Committee on Taxonomy suggested an exploratory program during the first year. It recommended definition of the limits of the region; examination of existing facilities; expansion of an existing institution to house and maintain standard international collections of regional aquatic organisms; development of ways and means of completing national collections in each taxonomic subregion; preparation of a bibliography of the most important taxonomic works published about the region during the last 25 years; development of coordination between existing taxonomic laboratories and research laboratories; and establishment of coordination in taxonomic studies between the proposed Council and international bodies such as International Commission for Zoological Nomenclature and UNESCO.

Collection and codification of information would occur during the second year. It would include preparation of check lists of aquatic organisms, area by area, and of commercially important groups of animals, family by family; preparation of handbooks of commercially important fishes of each economic area; and initiation of studies in racial or other fragmentation of species or stocks.

Publication and collection of material was suggested for the third year. The second year's results would be edited and published; maps showing zoogeographical and seasonal abundance of species would be prepared and published; and expeditions would be organized to collect and study aquatic fauna with particular reference to ecology.

Continuation of activities during the fourth and fifth years would include repeating the programs of the second and third years for different areas and different groups of aquatic animals.

The Committee on Technology reported that a final program could be developed only after a specific program had been submitted to government representatives for their comments and inclusion of the technological requirements of their countries. The value of an Indo-Pacific Fisheries Technological Institute was acknowledged, but it was not assigned a definite position in the program because it was not apparent that one central institute was preferable to a number of smaller centers, nor was it certain that its importance was greater than several other suggested projects.

Establishment of the Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council now awaits receipt of the five notifications of acceptance by the Director-General of the FAO.^{1/} At the

^{1/} The Governments of France and the Philippines have notified the Director-General of their acceptance of the Agreement.

Second Session of the Council of FAO in Washington, April 5 to 17, 1948, the Report of the FAO Baguio Fisheries Conference was accepted. Shortly thereafter, in a Circular Letter to Member Governments, the results of the Conference at Baguio was called to their attention by the Director-General and early acceptance of the Agreement urged.

Within six months after entry into force of the Agreement, the first meeting of the Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council is to be called by FAO at a place it shall designate.

LIST OF DELEGATES

Burma

U Ka Si
Financial Commissioner
Rangoon

Bo Pe Aung
Member of the People's Volunteer
Organization
Rangoon

U Khin
Senior Deputy Director of
Agriculture, Lower Burma
Rangoon

China

Dr. Liu Fah Hsuen
Director, Department of Fisheries
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
Nanking

France

Mr. R. Serene
Director of Oceanographic Institute
Indo-China, Nha Trang

Mr. P. Lenouvel
Member, French Economic Mission
in the Far East
Paris

India

Dr. S. L. Hora
Director of the Zoological Survey
of India, Benares

Netherlands

Dr. L.G.M. Baas Becking*
Director, Botanical Gardens
Buitenzorg, Java

Dr. J.K. de Jong
Officer - Institute Sea Fisheries
Makassar, East Indonesia

Dr. J.D.F. Hardenberg
Head of the Laboratory for
Investigation of the Sea
Java

Mr. P. W. Lokollo
Fisheries Technologist
East Indonesia, Makassar

Philippines

Dr. D.V. Villadolid**
Director, Bureau of Fisheries
Department of Agriculture and
Natural Resources
Manila

Mr. Claro Martin
Chief, Division of Fisheries Technology
Bureau of Fisheries, Department of
Agriculture and Natural Resources
Manila

* Vice-chairman of the conference.

** Chairman of the conference.

United Kingdom

Dr. W. M. Clyde
Food Adviser, Special Commissioner
in South East Asia
Singapore

Mr. J. A. Tubb
Fisheries Officer
Colony of North Borneo
Sandakan

Dr. G.A.C. Herklots
Secretary for Development
Colonial Secretary's Office
Hong Kong

United States of America

Mr. A.W. Anderson (Delegate)
Chief, Division of Commercial Fisheries
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Washington 25, D. C.

Mr. O.E. Sette (Advisor)
Chief, South Pacific Investigations
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Stanford University, California

Mr. C.J. Shohan (Alternate Delegate)
Advisor on Food and Agricultural
Programmes, Department of State
Washington, D. C.

Mr. H.E. Warfel (Advisor)
Biologist-in-Charge
Biological & Oceanographic Investigations
Philippine Fishery Programme
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Manila

Mr. E. W. Allen (Advisor)
Vice-Chairman of Pacific Fisheries
Conference
Seattle, Washington

Mr. T. MacClure (Advisor)
Advisor Fisheries
U.S.A. Military Government in Korea

Observers:Italy

Dr. V. Strigari
Charge' D'Affaires
Italian Legation, Manila

ORGANIZATIONSSupreme Commander for the Allied Powers (SCAP)

Mr. W.C. Herrington
Chief of Fisheries Division
Natural Resources Section
GHQ - S.C.A.P. - Tokyo

United Nations Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Mr. S.N. Dasgupta
Counsellor to UNESCO, Paris

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Sir Pheroze Kharegat
Regional Special Advisor

Mr. G. L. Kesteven
Regional Representative
FAO (Fisheries)
Singapore

Dr. D.B. Finn
Director of Fisheries Division

Dr. J. L. Kask
Chief Biologist, Fisheries Division

