

provement on the old method.”

Gordon said that if the bill to amend the program is passed, the agency will be able to process claims within 30-60 days. The pending legislation, according to Gordon, will make the Fishermen's Contingency Fund program very similar to the Fishing Vessel and Gear Damage Compensation Fund program, authorized by section 10 of the Fishermen's Protective Act.

The section 10 program, Gordon said, was enacted by Congress on the same

date as the Fishermen's Contingency Fund, 18 September 1978. Since enactment 62 claims have been processed in the Fishermen's Contingency Fund program. Of these, 23 were approved for payment of \$94,048.96. Under the section 10 program, the agency has processed 882 claims, of which 825 were approved for payment of \$5.8 million. The average processing time on completed section 10 claims has been about 56 days.

Since the two programs have been

administered out of the same office, Gordon attributed differences in performance to the differences in the authorizing laws and in the rules implementing the programs.

Gordon said that the agency has application forms available for filing claims against the Fishermen's Contingency Fund. These forms and copies of the new program regulations may be obtained by writing the Financial Services Division, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA, Washington, DC 20235.

Foreign Fishery Developments

The Fisheries of Trinidad and Tobago

Background

Trinidad and Tobago imported 131 t of fishery products from the United States in 1980, more than double the 64 t imported in 1979, according to the NMFS Foreign Fisheries Analysis Division. The most important commodity imported was canned salmon. Some observers believe that imports from the United States could be increased, for the current fishery import market is dominated by the United Kingdom and Canada.

The U.S. Regional Fisheries Attache for Latin America, Charles E. Finan, visited Trinidad and Tobago last year to review the status of the fisheries and investigate the possibility of increasing exports of U.S. fisheries products. While data on fish productivity is somewhat rough and subjective, there is detailed information on fish product imports and exports. Here, data has been gathered from official sources, knowledgeable

observers, and the FAO for the reader's comparison.

According to the Fisheries Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries, 1980 fisheries production was on the order of 25 million pounds, with Spanish mackerel constituting about half the catch. The Division put production of shrimp at 2 million pounds, and estimated lobster production at about 1 t, a marginal industry except to sport divers. Kingfish production was reported to have been 2 million pounds, shark 3 million pounds, red snapper over 1 million pounds, with one-half million pounds of flying fish caught, mostly for export to Barbados.

The FAO Fishery Country Profile shows the 1978 production as some 16,600,000 pounds live weight, so a 25,000,000-pound production in 1980 is quite a respectable increase. However, as indicated later, that 1980 figure may have been overly conservative.

It may also be well to compare the

above data to data in Table 1, the total wholesale distribution reported. According to that data from the Central Statistical Office, in 1979 some 2,546,000 kg were reported distributed throughout the country, of which 1,016,000 were carite and kingfish and 1,202,000 were mostly shark and shrimp. Export data for the same year show that 207,000 kg were exported. (By contrast, according to the Central Statistical Office, 3,600,000 kg were imported that same year.) Clearly, whatever the level of production, it is not keeping up with what is described as one of the highest per capita demands for fish in the world. More details on exports and imports are shown in Tables 2 and 3.

The Division notes that imports are



Table 1.—Fish sold at Port of Spain and San Fernando markets by quantity and value.

Year and period	Total		Carite and kingfish		Herring		Cavalli		Redfish		Other types ¹	
	1,000 kg	TT\$1,000 ²	1,000 kg	TT\$1,000	1,000 kg	TT\$1,000	1,000 kg	TT\$1,000	1,000 kg	TT\$1,000	1,000 kg	TT\$1,000
1974	2,721	4,417	514	1,331	144	66	224	482	117	317	1,721	2,220
1975	3,012	5,038	1,091	2,199	178	85	156	329	101	295	1,485	2,130
1976	2,726	5,603	768	2,170	154	80	168	481	88	310	1,548	2,562
1977	3,162	6,826	1,116	3,142	116	52	231	525	122	408	1,577	2,697
1978	2,944	8,443	1,065	3,836	153	81	204	628	155	712	1,369	3,187
1979	2,546	9,468	1,016	4,441	83	99	138	576	107	599	1,202	3,754
1978 1st quarter	690	2,009	135	616	11	8	42	158	35	175	467	1,052
2d quarter	713	2,198	202	932	47	25	49	155	41	203	374	882
3d quarter	770	2,190	341	1,174	57	27	62	185	48	196	263	608
4th quarter	771	2,046	387	1,114	38	21	51	130	31	138	265	645
1979 1st quarter	622	2,305	80	527	16	18	29	142	35	208	462	1,409
2d quarter	683	2,469	308	1,208	13	17	43	174	24	130	295	941
3d quarter	640	2,402	345	1,477	29	35	30	113	25	135	211	642
4th quarter	601	2,292	283	1,229	25	29	36	147	23	126	234	762

¹Includes inter alia shark and shrimp.

²US\$1.00=TT\$2.40 as of 17 July 1981

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Division.

indeed going up. Particularly important are salmon, canned sardines and herring, mackerel, smoked and pickled cod, and alewives. Most of this is from the United Kingdom and Canada, but frozen shrimp, canned mackerel, sardines, and salmon are imported from the United States. Total 1980 imports were estimated by the Division as about 10 million pounds. The Division described import duties as negligible, and said there are no price controls on fish sold at wholesale or retail. Therefore, imported fish have no built-in liability on the local market.

The Fleet

According to the Division, fishing has become a very profitable trade, and more vessels are being added to the fleet every year. Again from the FAO 1980 Profile, there were 2,133 registered fishing vessels in 1977. With over 200 vessels being registered each year, even allowing for boats sunk, burned, scrapped, sold or whatever, a steady fleet growth is indicated.

The Trinidad artisanal fleet consists of "pirogues" of 24-31 feet. The Tobago fleet of pirogues is smaller, normally 16-22 feet. Power is normally by 40-65 horsepower outboard motors. There are no sailboats.

The National Fisheries Co. (NFC), a government corporation now under private management, has 21 shrimp trawlers, each of 75 feet with freezing capabilities, now working waters off Surinam and Guyana. Brazil had closed off

Table 2.—Trinidad and Tobago's fishery imports and exports, 1979.

Commodity	Total imports C.I.F.		Total exports F.O.B.	
	Quantity (kg)	Value (TT\$ ¹)	Quantity (kg)	Value (TT\$ ¹)
Fish:				
fresh				
chilled				
frozen	N/A ²	95,033	N/A	1,412,684
Fish:				
canned	1,939,856	9,436,976	11,689	34,901
Crustaceans and mollusks	27,417	365,484	181,133	1,087,336
Fish, crust., & moll. prep.	1,610,900	8,458,546	14,038	44,609

¹US\$1.00 = TT\$2.40 as of 17 July 1981

²N/A = Not available.

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Division.

shrimp fishing to the Trinidad and Tobago fleet for the time being, but Trinidad and Tobago officials hoped that this fishery could again be opened. Seven Korean tuna longliners under contract to the NFC were fishing for tuna in the vicinity of long. 40°W and lat. 5°N. Four more of these 300-t vessels were scheduled to join the fleet. The fleet includes three 90-foot trawlers and one of 170 feet.

The NFC reports that maintenance of larger vessels is quite costly, and that the cost of a typical 75-foot shrimp trawler is US \$400,000. A typical shrimper has four crewmen. Fuel costs TT \$45 (the bank rate is TT \$2.40 to US \$1.00) per metric ton, a special, subsidized price. A fisherman on a shrimp boat gets paid by the voyage. On the average he works about 6 hours a day and a typical voyage

Table 3.—Trinidad and Tobago imports and exports fish and fish products, 1970-78.

Year	Imports		Exports	
	Quantity (Pounds)	Value (TT\$ ¹)	Quantity (Pounds)	Value (TT\$ ¹)
1970	7,348,653	\$4,859,078	5,691,640	\$4,560,842
1971	6,576,923	5,072,587	2,158,885	1,975,260
1972	7,275,411	6,094,089	1,121,984	1,611,186
1973	5,828,674	5,485,898	4,251,201	3,974,271
1974	6,785,682	9,206,224	2,794,801	2,335,406
1975	6,596,912	9,662,763	1,704,744	1,916,899
1976	7,584,134	12,527,453	3,654,186	2,733,127
1977	5,766,171	10,882,550	3,736,819	2,118,489
1978	10,342,026	18,223,705	1,104,550	1,735,979

¹US\$1.00 = TT\$2.40 as of 17 July 1981

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Division.

is 3 weeks. The NFC is not interested in buying boats at this time, but is most interested in joint ventures involving access to other nations' fishing grounds.

National Fisheries Company

In 1973 the Trinidad and Tobago Government formed the NFC to carry out large-scale shrimp and finfishing operations and to engage in processing and marketing operations. Continuing financial and management difficulties led to the hiring 2 years ago of a private local management firm, Navarros and Company Ltd., to take over the NFC's affairs.

According to NFC officials, the company's objective for the first year was to produce 20 million pounds of various types of fishery products. Press accounts indicate the eventual goal is 50 million pounds annually. Present capacity for filleting 7,000 pounds of fish a day manually, using 32 people in 2 lines, will eventually be joined by 3 more filleting

lines employing 48 more people, a special line for preparing sharks, and a mechanized filleting machine capable of handling 6,000 pounds per hour.

NFC officials reported that their plant was already packing headless and peeled and head-on shrimp for shipping to the United States, meeting full U.S. size and sanitary standards. The NFC also formerly had a fishmeal plant in operation (it was then idle) and would soon add the capacity for battered and breaded products. Salting, drying, and smoking operations are also possible.

The NFC also handles imports of fish for domestic consumption, as well as purchases of fish from foreign fleets. Such imports include frozen, semiprocessed, block, and minced fish for fish cake. From 60 to 70 percent of imports are frozen; smaller proportions are dried, smoked, refrigerated salted, or otherwise processed.

The NFC invites all foreign fleets to collaborate in the supplying of fish products. Asked about interest in purchasing frozen U.S. underutilized species, NFC officials said the United States would be a welcome supplier if prices were more competitive. At the moment, they claimed to get better prices and quality by buying from Japan, Taiwan, and South American sources. The most popular imports are white fish, particularly hake, cod, and whiting. Trinidad and Tobago is also a good market for shrimp, NFC officials say, stating the price of shrimp in Port of Spain is higher than on world markets. Lobster tails, red snapper—whole and filleted—as well as kingfish, Spanish mackerel, and other mackerels are also highly saleable.

The NFC monitors Trinidad and Tobago catch data, and officials there believe the Fisheries Division's production data are highly conservative. They believe the overall catch may be closer to 30 or 40 million pounds of fish, rather than the 25 million cited by the Division. They see shrimp as close to 10 million pounds, and Spanish mackerel and lobster tails as double the Division's figures. (Incidentally, other sources agree the lobster figure is much too low.) NFC officials similarly believe that Trinidad and Tobago is catching much more red snapper, kingfish, and shark than the official

figures would indicate. However, they agree that collection of accurate data is a basic need.

Also needed, NFC officials say, are up-to-date surveys of fish stocks; the last survey of available resources in the waters around the islands was done by the FAO about 8 years ago. (A related issue mentioned by various sources is the fact that Trinidad and Tobago has no laws specifically prohibiting fishing in its waters, and is still working on the declaration of an Exclusive Economic Zone.)

NFC officials say that a phenomenon of the oil-rich country is the steady increase in customers who want processed fish products. Of course some of this demand is at hotels and restaurants which cater to foreigners, but Trinidadians, also, are increasingly customers for such products.

The Import Picture

RFA Finan spoke in detail with officials of a major fish importing firm, which is importing live Maine lobster, lobster tails, king crab, clams, oysters, squid, and (from Taiwan) kingfish. This company utilizes air shipment exclusively and specializes in service to local restaurants, which pay a premium price for prompt, dependable service. Import problems include the difficulty of securing a reliable customs broker (an absolute necessity) and getting an import license promptly.

This firm said that as Trinidadian demand rises, so do prices of most fish. Maine lobster was running about US \$14 per pound, and 26-30 shrimp were worth TT \$12.00 per pound. Chinese restaurants are primary purchasers of shrimp. There are reportedly excellent opportunities for increasing exports of U.S. fish products to the islands. Squid and mackerel from the United States are highly attractive. There is good air cargo service from the United States, and local importers are used to air cargo procedures. Trinidad and Tobago has adequate frozen storage space, costing about TT \$2.08 per pound per month. Interested parties need to survey not only fish importers, but also the individual hotels, which have their own brokers and do their own importing.

Finan had hoped to discuss the import situation with appropriate officials of the large Hi-Lo Supermarket chain, but its chief food buyer was not in the country. However, fish displayed on ice at one store was advertised as: White fish, TT \$6.99 per pound; Salmon, TT \$0.99 per pound; dark fish steaks, TT \$4.59 per pound; and small peeled shrimp TT \$8.99 per pound. Salt cod from Canada was priced at TT \$4.99 per pound. By late afternoon, although there was plenty of packaged, processed fish items in that store, fresh-frozen supplies were very low. Of course, most fish was bought at the central market very early in the morning or from individuals selling around the city.

Hotel officials on the islands would apparently be delighted to talk to U.S. processors and exporters about increasing exports of fish. They cannot secure sufficient fish products for their clients as it is. There are at least 14 hotels on the two islands which have dining facilities.

Another possible opportunity to increase exports would be in U.S. species of aquarium fish. Trinidad and Tobago used to be a major exporter of aquarium fish to the United States, but, according to exporters, local species are being damaged by marine contamination. Trinidadians are now reportedly stocking their aquaria with goldfish stocks from the United States.

In the opinion of the Regional Fisheries Attache, Trinidad and Tobago should provide an opportunity to increase U.S. exports beyond the 1980 level of 290,150 pounds valued at \$488,878. This nation of some 1,500,000 inhabitants lists a per capita income of over \$1,900, and enjoys the income from an oil production of 201,000 barrels per day and gas production of 5.5 million m³ per day. Given the continually increasing demand for a wide variety of fish species, Trinidad and Tobago would appear to be a potentially valuable export customer, despite increasing domestic catches.

Persons interested in communicating with potential importers will find contacts listed in IFR-77/262R (revised 31 March 1978) and IFR-81/117 at NMFS Market News Offices. (Source: IFR-81/117.)

Mexico Aims for Large and Modern Tuna Fleet

Mexico is building one of the world's largest and most modern tuna fleets. In early October 1981, Mexico had a fleet of about 60 tuna vessels. That country is currently building an additional 61 vessels for its tuna fleet: of these, 13 will be constructed in domestic and 48 in foreign shipyards. Of the latter total, 20 seiners were ordered in Spain, 10 longliners in Japan, 7 seiners in Italy, 5 seiners in the United States, 4 seiners in Canada, and 2 seiners in Norway.

All these vessels are scheduled for delivery by the end of 1982 when the Mexican Government estimates that its tuna fleet will have a total carrying capacity of about 110,000 t. Such a fleet will rival the U.S. tuna fleet which totaled 126 seiners with a carrying capacity of 105,000 t in 1980. Recent reports from Mexico, however, indicate that Mexican officials have begun to reevaluate the massive planned expansion of the country's tuna fleet. Unconfirmed reports suggest that some of the above vessel orders may be canceled as the Government has reportedly decided to limit the fleet to 100 purse seiners. In addition, some of the seiners transferred to Mexican flag will now reportedly be transferred back to U.S. registry. Thus, while the exact numbers are not available, it is clear that by late 1982 Mexico will have one of the world's major tuna fleets.

Mexico may have difficulty operating such a large, newly acquired tuna fleet economically within the 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) which it claims. Even when tuna schools appear in large quantities off Mexico, the country probably will not be able to profitably deploy such a large fleet within its own 200-mile EEZ. The Mexican tuna fleet will have to be increasingly deployed in the 200-mile zones claimed by neighboring countries. The Mexican Department of Fisheries is planning for such distant-water operations and has begun

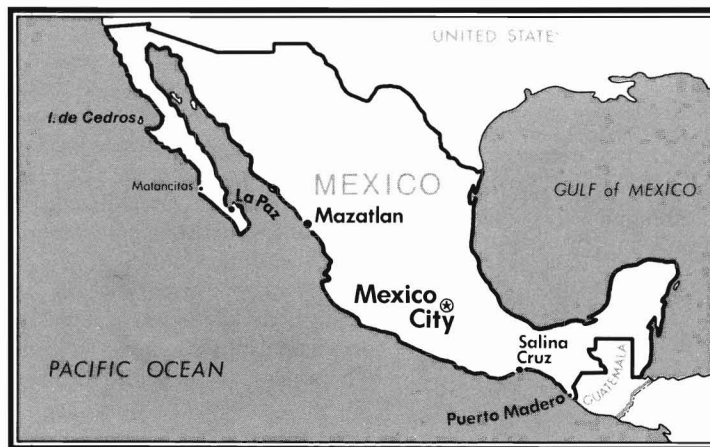
to build modern tuna ports and canneries in southern Mexico at Puerto Madero near the Guatemalan border and at Salina Cruz. The Puerto Madero port will be operated by Mexico's state-owned fishing company, Productos Pesqueros Mexicanos (PPM), which has obtained loans from four Mexican Government agencies, Saudi Arabia, and Denmark to build the port.

This huge buildup of the Mexican tuna fleet will place an even greater stress on the already overfished tuna stocks in the Eastern Tropical Pacific (ETP). Yellowfin tuna yields and the average size of the fish caught in the ETP have been declining for several years. The 1980 yellowfin catch in the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission Convention Area was below the estimated maximum sustainable yield (MSY) of 160,000 t. The 1981 catch will probably also be below the MSY. The low 1980 and 1981 yellowfin catch of the entire international tuna fleet may be partly due to Mexico's exclusion of the U.S. tuna fleet from the Mexican 200-mile EEZ¹. Nevertheless, it is generally believed that the yellowfin tuna is being overfished in the ETP. The Mexican 1981-82 fleet additions are the

largest in the history of the ETP tuna fishery, and the impact of the increased fishing effort on tuna stocks is impossible to calculate.

Mexico is experiencing difficulties in unloading, processing, and storing its current tuna catch. The Government is expanding old and building new canning and freezing plants in various locations along its Pacific coast: Isla de Cedros, La Paz, Matancitas, Mazatlan, Salina Cruz, and Puerto Madero. It is unlikely that these facilities, however, will be capable of handling the catch of all the new vessels in the near future. The problem will be especially acute if Mexico and the United States do not resolve their dispute over tuna management policies so that Mexico can resume exporting frozen tuna to the United States. Plans for the development of the Mexican tuna industry were based on exporting to the United States, one of the world's most important tuna markets. A continuation of the U.S. embargo on Mexican tuna for a prolonged period will significantly affect Mexico's economic calculations. (Source: IFR-81/160.)

¹The 1981 catch was also limited by problems the Mexican tuna fleet experienced. Mexico will report a sharply higher 1981 tuna catch, but the catch would have been even higher if the country's fleet had not lost fishing time as a result of delays unloading in Mexican ports and if the fleet had not been forced to reduce fishing effort because of the country's inability to sell existing stocks of tuna.



Japan Negotiates With Micronesia and Palau

In December 1981, the Japanese Government negotiated with the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Palau for the permission to fish inside the 200-mile fishery jurisdiction claimed by these Pacific islands. Negotiations with the Micronesians temporarily ended in disagreement, while negotiations with Palau continued.

Federated States of Micronesia

Fishery negotiations between Japan and the Federated States of Micronesia¹ (FSM) broke off on 10 December 1981, according to a Japan Fisheries Agency official. The two parties met to extend the current private fisheries agreement (which was to expire on 31 December 1981) between the FSM and three Japanese fishery associations whose members fish within the Micronesian-claimed 200-mile zone. The two sides disagreed on the fishing fees and the method of payment and, as a result, negotiations were suspended. The FSM reportedly wanted to nearly double the 1981 Japanese fishing fee of about 2.3 million, while Japan wanted to change from paying an annual lump sum to paying a fee for each vessel. Japanese vessels were expected to stay out of the 200-mile zone which the FSM claims until agreement was reached. Both Japan

¹The FSM consists of the districts of Yap, Truk, Ponape, and Kosrae in the Caroline Islands.

Note: Unless otherwise credited, material in this section is from either the Foreign Fishery Information Releases (FFIR) compiled by Sunee C. Sonu, Foreign Reporting Branch, Fishery Development Division, Southwest Region, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA, Terminal Island, CA 90731, or the International Fishery Releases (IFR), Language Services Biweekly (LSB) reports, or Language Services News Briefs (LSNB) produced by the Office of International Fisheries Affairs, National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA, Washington, DC 20235.

and FSM planned to resume negotiations early this year.

Republic of Palau

Japanese fishing vessels reentered the Palau-claimed² 200-mile zone on 1 December 1981, after Palau's legislature ratified a provisional fisheries agreement with Japan on 2 October 1981. Under the 4-month agreement, Japanese fishermen were allowed to fish there until 31 March 1982. The Chairman of the Palau Maritime Authority, John Sugiyama, was scheduled to meet on 21 December 1981 in Tokyo with Japanese fishery officials to discuss the extension of the agreement beyond 31 March 1982. (Source: U.S. Regional Fisheries Attache, U.S. Embassy, Tokyo, IFR-81/188.)

²Palau is in the southwest region of the Caroline Islands.

Egyptian Food Labeling Requirements Enforced

Egyptian authorities are increasing their enforcement of existing food labeling regulations, which in the past have not been strictly enforced, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Minister of Supply and Home Trade has announced that all imported packaged or canned items not conforming to Egyptian labeling requirements will not be cleared from customs. Violators (Egyptian importers, customs officials, etc.) will be jailed for 6-24 months and fined from \$595 to 1,190.

Although labeling requirements differ from one product to another, in general each food consignment must be accompanied by a certificate of analysis, health certificate, and a certificate indicating that the product is used in the country of origin for human consumption.

Canada's Pacific Fishing: The Pearse Report

The Canadian Federal Government appointed University of British Columbia economist Peter Pearse to form a commission on Pacific fisheries in January 1981. He was charged to study and make recommendations on the condition, management, and utilization of fishery stocks on the Pacific coast of Canada. Since January, Pearse has conducted a one-man inquiry, and on 9 November he issued a 150-page preliminary report entitled "Conflict and Opportunity."

Pearse concludes that the fishing industry on the Canadian west coast is confronted with serious and fundamental problems. It is essentially a question of too many boats chasing too few fish. He recommends that the size of salmon and herring fleets be reduced. Pearse's preliminary report includes several concrete recommendations:

1) A major "buy-back" program of fishing boats largely financed by royalties and managed by a crown corporation. The program would close the loopholes left in a similar program launched 13 years ago by then Canadian Fisheries

Minister Jack Davis.

2) Royalties on all landings of salmon and roe-herring beginning in 1982. The charges should be collected from those who buy fish from the fishermen.

3) Elimination of subsidies to Canadian shipyards for vessel construction or conversion and tighter restrictions on replacement of currently licensed vessels with new vessels having increased fishing power.

4) Elimination of tax subsidies for the purchase of new fishing vessels.

5) A new licensing system to license fishermen rather than vessels, which is the current practice.

6) Changes in rules governing transfers and designation of gear permitted under each licensee.

7) A quota system for halibut and food-herring fisheries that will provide each licensee with the right to harvest a predetermined quantity of fish.

8) Establishment of a native Indian fishing corporation administered by the Indians to ensure their survival within the commercial fishing field. (Source: U.S. Consulate General and IFR 81/172.)

Latin American Fish Group Is Organized

Fisheries ministers and directors from 10 Latin American countries met in Guayaquil, Ecuador, on 16 October 1981, to discuss a regional approach to fisheries problems. Delegations from Costa Rica, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Peru attended the series of meetings held under the auspices of SELA (Sistema Económico Latinoamericano). Mexico's active delegation was headed by Fisheries Director Fernando Rafful. Observers from Brazil, Colombia, FAO, the Inter-American Development Bank, and other international bodies were also present.

The meeting began on 13 October with the arrival in Guayaquil of the staff from SELA's Action Committee on marine products. The Action Committee was created in 1977 only 2 years after the formation of SELA itself. The task of the Action Committee was to lay the groundwork for the arrival of the fisheries ministers on 16 October. The ministers met 16 and 17 October, reviewing the work of the Action Committee and attempting to arrive at a consensus on fishery issues. Several ministers pointed out the importance of marine food resources in the SELA area and their largely unexploited nature. At the same time, the speakers seemed fully cognizant that reckless and hasty exploitation of Latin America's marine resources could lead to rapid depletion.

The ministers concluded an agreement at the Action Committee's recommendation, establishing a permanent regional fisheries authority to be called OLDEPESCA (Organización Latinoamericana de Desarrollo Pesquero). OLDEPESCA will replace SELA's Action Committee on marine products whose mandate expires this year. Mexi-

can Director General of International Fisheries Alonso Lopez Cruz was elected chairman of the Committee for its final year, replacing Ecuador's fisheries Subsecretary Tully Loo.

The significance of this development goes beyond the mere substitution of one organization for another. The SELA Action Committee on Marine Products was never intended to be a permanent institution. The Committee's temporary nature made it difficult to formulate strategy and especially to obtain funding from participating nations. The participants seemed confident that the creation of a permanent regional fisheries organization was a significant and necessary step toward obtaining governmental funding and demonstrating participants' commitment to a regional approach to fishery problems. Beyond that, the meeting seemed to have been largely educational. The participants analyzed technical matters and largely avoided both politics and any significant move toward regional licensing. (Source: U.S. Consulate General, IFR-81/158.)

Norwegian Fish Cannery Merge

A total of 12 companies and exporters of canned fish in Norway have joined forces in the establishment of a new company, Norway Foods Ltd., thus pooling their resources on the export market. This means that a new and more efficient exporter will now compete with foreign companies on the export market, according to the Norwegian Information Service.

The shares capital of Norway Foods Ltd. is \$5 million, while assets and machinery are valued at nearly \$31 million.

Annual turnover is about \$75 million, and there are 1,700 employees. About 90 percent of production is meant for export. Production covers a wide range of foodstuffs from the sea (which are not sold as fresh goods) as well as a number of other products.

The head office and marketing division are situated in Stavanger, while the plants will be operated from Bergen. The head of the new concern, Kjell Landaas, says that the aim of the amalgamation is to exploit available resources in a more rational manner, while eliminating at the same time the competition between the previously separate companies. Norway Foods Ltd. also plans to develop new products.

New Mexican Research Vessels

Mexico's National University in Mexico City commissioned its first oceanographic research vessel in December 1980. The \$8 million RV *El Puma* is 50 m long, 10 m wide, and displaces 1,000 t. The vessel was built in Norway, and according to Mexican officials is equipped with six laboratories and equipment for multidisciplinary research which will include fisheries research. The *El Puma* is the newest addition to Mexico's rapidly expanding marine research program.

The vessel was designed for research and training in physical, chemical, geophysical, geological, and biological oceanography. It is crewed by 14 and has ample room for 20 scientists. The vessel can stay at sea almost a month before returning to port, and reportedly will cost \$2 million a year to operate. Meanwhile, a sister ship to *El Puma* is being constructed at the same shipyard and is expected to operate in the Gulf of Mexico sometime this year. (Source: IFR-81/180.)