

PELFISH PROJECT PRESENTATION

11

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The PELFISH Project which studies the fishing activity in the Java Sea is sponsored by Indonesia (Agency for Agricultural Research and Development, AARD), France (French Research Institute for Development through Cooperation, ORSTOM) and The European Union. Its research is focused on offshore pelagic fisheries (mainly medium and large seiners fisheries) and its main objectives are :

- the provision of scientific advice for the future management of this fishery;
- the improvement of the performance of this fishing system in terms of catch, conservation and distribution;
- the evaluation of the socio-economic impact of potential management measures and technical improvement;
- the enhancement of fishermen's income.

To reach these objectives, PELFISH has developed three main fields of activities :

■ RESOURCES AND EXPLOITATION

It refers to fisheries functioning as well as to bioecology or fish populations dynamic. A special attention is paid to fish behavior and biomass estimation through echo-prospecting and integration.

■ SOCIO-ECONOMIC STUDIES

They evaluate production costs, fish prices, incomes in the fishing sector and downstream. The research also targets the fishermen conditions of work, the role of women in the production and the respective weight of the formal and informal sectors.

■ TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS

It is related to nets design and its evolution, the implementation of electronic devices on the fishing boats, the evaluation of the fish quality and the methods of conservation.

ACTUAL STATE OF THE PROJECT

Over a period of 5 to 6 years the contribution of ORSTOM, European Union and the Indonesian government in financial and human resources has demonstrated the importance of the PELFISH



project targets. The training of Indonesian fishermen, technicians and scientists is heavily emphasized. However the success of the Project cannot be evaluated only on scientific and technical beats but moreover on its ability to use the information to help local interveners in the fishery.

Owing to its multi-disciplinary and multi-targets approach the PELFISH Project is now able to work with government representatives and boats owners in order to assess in a near future various management hypothesis. This is of most importance because the seiners fishery is in a transitional state. In this kind of "pre-industrial" state hasty innovations may generate too heavy rates of exploitation.

SEMINAR CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROJECT

This first seminar on the knowledge acquired on biology, population dynamics and exploitation allows us to draw some general conclusions.

- The center of gravity of the whole system seems to be located on the eastern part of the Java Sea and raises questions on the biological links between this part and the western region of the Makassar Strait and of the Flores Sea.
- It is also noticeable that the seiners exploitation is already well developed and almost certainly will not extend further in the actual technical and economical environment.
- The complementary studies to be done are well identified. They concern mainly the spatio-temporal variations of the fishing effort, the definition of the geographic boundaries of the stocks, the biological importance of the oriental regions. A lack of information on the environment is also to be noted.
- The work already accomplished will acquire all its meaning when the socio-economical studies will bring their information on costs, social organization, distribution systems, etc... Only a global approach will allow the Project to find out if the Java Sea fisheries are limited by the resource or the market and, if not, how the situation will develop in time, what are the future possibilities for the large and medium seiners exploitation, what is the level of adaptability of the various parts in the situation, what are the risks linked to the exploitation of variable resources. From the answers to these questions depend the optimal decisions of management. The seminars on acoustics and socioeconomic planned in 1995 will complete this first one and will allow us to have a better view of the situation.

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