



Fishing Line



NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL FISHERIES AUTHORITY

ISSUE No. 6

November - December, 2004

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PNG Attends WCPF Commission Inaugural Meeting



• The Hon. Ben Semri (centre) with Heads of Pacific Member countries pose for a photograph during the inaugural session of the Commission.

Papua New Guinea has participated in the 7th Session of the Preparatory Conference (PrepCon) on the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries (WCPF) Commission, which coincided with the Inaugural Meeting of the WCPF Commission in Phonpei, Federated States of Micronesia from the 6th - 7th December 2004.

One of the main agenda discussed at the PrepCon was the rules and procedures for the operation of the Commission.

The establishment of the Western and Central Pacific Tuna Commission is one of the major events in the management of tuna resources in the region. This commission is established under the Convention on the Management of Highly Migratory and Straddling Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific High. The aim of the Convention is to manage the tuna stocks in its entirety. This would enable PNG to be involved in the management of the fish stocks in the high seas. PNG together with other coastal states will work together to ensure that compatible management measures are put in place in the high seas. PNG has been an active player in discussions leading up to the establishment of the Commission and has hosted the second Preparatory Conference in Madang, and also had Ambassador Lucy Bogari serving as a Chair of the Administration and Budget Working Group during the Preparatory Conference process.

The Seventh PrepCon, also recommended to the first meeting of the WCPF Commission that the Federated States of Micronesia would be the host country for the Commission office.

The inaugural meeting of the WCPF Commission was held a day after the Prepcon meeting from the 9th - 10th December 2004.

The President of the Federated States of Micronesia, Hon. Joseph Urusemal gave the opening address and outlined the history of the processes leading to the culmination of the WCPF Commission and the future outlook. He also called on the Island States to actively participate in and not only the management of tuna resources but also in the domestic industry development. The active participation of Papua New Guinea's fishing industry throughout the Multi-lateral High Level Consultations and PrepCon process was also acknowledged as a good example for other Pacific Islands States.

Hon. Ben Semri, Minister for Fisheries said that with the WCPF Commission now formally established, it is important that PNG formulates a clear plan of action that will state the type of approach that will be taken to ensure that PNG is both adequately represented actively participated in the meetings and work of the Commission. He said, it is therefore, imperative that a Committee be established whose major responsibility is to fully understand the WCPF Convention.

From the Managing Director's Desk

As this would be the last issue of the 'Fishing Line', for 2004, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff of the National Fisheries Authority, both here in Port Moresby and National Fisheries College, Kavieng for your undivided support and cooperation accorded to me during the last seven months of serving the Authority as the Acting Managing Director. I thank the ADB, the EU and AusAID for supporting fisheries project in the country and also the line government departments and non-government agencies that work along side the NFA to get some of the major developments going and several more to be accomplished in the new year.

I wish to highlight the achievements made by the NFA this year. The NFA is a dynamic organisation that is facing a lot challenges. The challenges are being handled by a capable Board and a team of committed management and staff. Despite unsubstantiated claims of mismanagement by certain armchair experts, the NFA continues to lead as a model fisheries management organisation in the Pacific. This is widely recognised by regional organisations such as, the Forum Fisheries Agency, the South Pacific Commission, the Western and Central Pacific Tuna Commission and various regional governments, including Australia and New Zealand. Our staff is second to none and skilled personnel continue to secure important regional posts.

NFA's achievements for 2004 are summarised as follows:

- A record K40 million has been paid as dividend to the National Government above budget of K18 million. No other government statutory body is able to match NFA's dividend payment in 2004. In fact, since 2001 or over a period of four years, NFA has paid a total of K11.3 million in dividend to the National Government.
- The adoption of the new Tuna Convention on the management of tuna in high seas of Central and Western Pacific Ocean which came into effect in June 2004.
- The adoption of the Vessel Day Scheme (VDS), which will replace the Palau Arrangement by May 2005. The new VDS will replace the current control on number of purse seine licences of 205 with fishing days to control effort. Papua New Guinea has been allocated the highest number of days of 6,358 among the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) members. Under the new VDS, PNG will be able to control fishing effort within its waters and the region. This will assist in the management of Bigeye and Yellowfin tuna stocks, which are declining.
- The execution of a Chinese Government aid project, which will see the establishment of a 50 metric tonnes per day tuna loining plant on NFA land on the former Lae Yacht Club site. The project is a Build-Operate and Transfer project that will use the dedicated wharf to be built in Lae under the ADB Coastal Fisheries Wharf Project. The total cost of the project is K10 million which will be fully funded by the Chinese Government. Once completed the project will be leased to the private sector.
- The handing over of fishing boats to local fishing companies in New Ireland, Morobe and Madang provinces under the European Union Rural Coastal Fisheries Development Project which is market driven.
- The execution of Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with six provinces this year. So far, NFA has MOAs with Madang, Morobe, Sandaun, Bougainville, Central, and Milne Bay Province to assist the administration of national fisheries functions in the maritime provinces of Papua

New Guinea. The NFA is able to purchase and install computers as well as renovate office building and meet some training costs for provincial fisheries officers. NFA will complete the signing of MOAs with the remaining nine provinces this year.

- The establishment of basic fisheries infrastructure (wharf and seafood processing plant) in Kavieng and Lombrum with similar projects earmarked for Lae, Alotau, Buka and Daru with the great support from AusAID, European Union and ADB.
- The continuing assistance of K1 million paid to the Maritime Element of the PNG Defence Force each year to assist with surveillance of our waters for illegal fishing.
- The successful showcasing of PNG seafood products in the EU Seafood Exposition in Brussels with financial assistance of the EU Rural Coastal Fisheries Development Project and INFOFISH, a regional seafood marketing and development organisation established under the banner of Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). As a result, seven local companies have secured food safety and quality assurance accreditation and are now exporting to the EU.
- The INFOFISH was able to assist PNG and Maldives in post harvest handling and value-added processing and marketing techniques of tuna which will enable our local companies to export to overseas markets.
- The launching of NFA's Corporate Planning Exercise for the new NFA Corporate Plan (2005-2007) which has started last year and should be completed by early this year.
- The signing of project agreement with East New Britain Resources Development Company for the construction of a 60 metric tonnes per day tuna loining plant in Kokopo.
- The signing of a project agreement with Offshore Master Company of Thailand for the construction of 120 metric tonnes per day tuna loining and canning plant in Wewak.
- The instigated move for removal of Section 9 of the Customs Tariff Act, the Agriculture Green Revolution would not work.

The challenges faced were:-

- The high cost of business especially fuel and freight cost which forced many citizen companies to tie up their vessels especially in the tuna longline and prawn fishing business
- The management of yellowfin and bigeye tuna stocks which are declining
- The high incidence of under-reporting and illegal fishing operations which requires effective surveillance of our waters
- Lack of infrastructure which increases the opportunity cost of fish currently being taken and processed outside of PNG
- The declining prawn stocks in the Gulf of Papua

Managing fisheries has its own problems and challenges and the achievements stated above did not come easy, which required cooperative effort from all staff.

Once again, I thank you and I look forward to working with you all in 2005.

Have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

SYLVESTER POKAJAM
Acting Managing Director

Staff Profile



Name: John Edward Kasu
Age: 45
Marital Status: Married with two children
Qualification: Masters of Science in Fishing Gear Technology

Current Position: Acting Deputy Managing Director & Acting Corporate Service Manager (Principal, National Fisheries College).

John Kasu comes from Labu Tali village, Morobe Province and is the eldest in a family of 11 children. His father was a Primary School Headmaster hence, John had attended a number of primary schools within Morobe Province.

John began his high school education in 1971 at Bugandi High School in the Morobe Province and in 1974 he completed his Form 4 (Grade 10). He was then selected to attend Kerevat National High School, Rabaul, East New Britain from 1975 to 1976. Upon completion of Form 6 (Grade 12), he was selected to attend the University of Technology in 1977 to pursue a Diploma in Fisheries Technology. It was a three-year program and he graduated in 1979. He was the dux of that class and was awarded the University of Technology Council Medal. He was immediately offered employment by the University as a Technical Officer and assumed the job beginning of 1980.

In 1981, he successfully applied for a teaching position as Technical Instructor and began his teaching career in the Fisheries Department. Whilst there, he applied for the Japanese Government Mombusho Scholarship and left in October 1982 to study at the Tokyo University of Fisheries, Tokyo, Japan. Prior to entering the Tokyo University of Fisheries, he had to undergo a six months training program in the Japanese language at the Osaka University of Foreign Language Studies, Osaka, Japan.

In April 1983, after obtaining his Certificate in Japanese Language, he commenced a one-year research program in Fishing Gear Technology, and in 1984, proceeded to pursue a Masters in Science in the same field. His masters thesis was on "The Effect of Ultraviolet Radiation on Fishing Gear Material". He completed his Masters Program in 1986 and returned to Papua New Guinea to resume work as Technical Instructor at the University of Papua New Guinea following the Fisheries Department's transfer from Unitech, Lae to the UPNG, Port Moresby. He was promoted to Lecturer that year and remained with the University of Papua New Guinea until 2000.

He taught courses in fishing gear technology, fish handling and processing, fisheries biology, aquaculture and other fisheries related subjects. In 1995, the Fisheries Department was amalgamated with the Biology Department and he therefore had to also teach basic biology subjects. In 1996, John left to study at the Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada for a year. Upon his return, he continued to teach with the Biology Department until 1999 when he applied for the position of Principal of the National Fisheries College and successfully obtained the position.

He joined NFA in 2000, as the Principal of the National Fisheries College. In December 2003, he was appointed as Acting Corporate Services Manager and was assigned at the National Fisheries Authority in Port Moresby. In addition, he was also appointed as the Acting Deputy Managing Director in July 2004.

NFA pays State K10m dividend



• Hon. Ben Semri (right) presenting the cheque to Hon. Bart Philemon.

The National Government received an early Christmas present from the National Fisheries Authority in the form of the final dividend payment of K10 million for 2004.

Minister for Fisheries Hon. Ben Semri made the presentation to Minister for Finance and Treasury Hon. Bart Philemon in the presence of NFA Managing Director Sylvester Pokajam and senior government and NFA officials at the NFA Conference room on 1st December 2004.

When presenting the K10 million cheque, Minister Semri said the total dividend payments for this year amount to K38 million, well over the budgeted amount of K18 million. Since 2001, that is over a period of 4 years NFA has paid to the government of PNG a total of K111 million in dividends.

He added the NFA makes over 90 percent of its revenue from bilateral fishing access agreements. The bilateral fishing access agreements are entered into with purse seine fishing fleets from China, Korea, Taiwan and Philippines, as well as interim agreements with locally based foreign vessels and US Multilateral Treaty and FSM Arrangement vessels.

Mr Semri said next year a number of new tuna management regimes would be in force in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. One of these is the revision of the Palau Arrangement, a tuna management tool in the region from control of purse seine vessels, which is fully utilized. While it may be effective, it restricts countries such as PNG to pursue its domestic industry development objectives.

"We are therefore looking forward to the new Vessel Days Systems when it is in force in May 2005 it will enable PNG to pursue its onshore investment drive as PNG will be allocating its vessel days to fleet that are associated with meaningful onshore investment", Mr Semri said.

He indicated PNG's allocation is around 6,300 days. This would mean that the number of domestic investment increase, more and more vessel days will be allocated to the vessels associated with these investments and lesser number of vessels days will be available for bilateral fishing access agreements. Effectively, the direct revenue to NFA from access fees will reduce and so is the dividend payment to the National Government.

Mr Semri said, considering the limited number of vessel days, PNG will approach the other two big tuna resource rich countries, namely the Federated States of Micronesia and Kiribati to enter into bilateral arrangements or partnerships that would secure the supply of tuna for processing plants in the region.

"As Minister responsible for fisheries, I must say that we do expect the direct revenue to come down and foreign direct investments, number of jobs in the fisheries sector, spin off activities and foreign exchange reserves go up. This in fact will be a big achievement and is indeed in line with the Government's Export Driven Economic Growth and Recovery Strategy," Mr Semri said.

He said the fisheries sector has grown from strength to strength and with two major facilities with an average of 60 tons processing capacity per day to be established in 2006, this will go a long way in contributing towards the realization of PNG's economic growth and development objectives.

Upon receiving the cheque, Mr Philemon said he was very pleased and thanked NFA for the early "Christmas gift".

He said NFA plays an important role in the economic sector as it holds huge potential to boost economic growth and employment opportunities.

Minister Philemon said in order for this, NFA needs to have professional people to manage its interests as well as endeavour to encourage more investors.

Indo-PNG to Sign MOU



• From left: NFA's Ms. Welete Wararu, Sir Peter Barter and senior government officials who were part of the delegation led by Sir Peter to the Joint Border Committee talks in Jakarta. The MOU was one of the agenda discussed.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is soon to be signed between the Indonesian and PNG governments concerning a common border fisheries development programme.

The MOU, which is expected to be signed in March next year shall cover aspects such as development, management, technical co-operation, trade and investment and bilateral arrangements between both states.

The Fisheries Joint Border Working committee comprising members from the Fisheries and Marine Services of Papua Province and the National Fisheries Authority (PNG), have so far developed the Terms of Reference (TOR) as guidelines for the proposed MOU. This was done in line with the recommendation of the Border Liaison Meeting (BLM) held in Jayapura in September. Representing NFA to the talks were Ms. Welete Wararu, Provincial Liaison Officer and Ms Joyce Agaru, Team Leader, Enforcement Unit.

Under the TOR, the MOU would address important development aspects such as eradicating Illegal Fishing, Traditional Border Crossers' Fishing Activities, Joint Development Access, Common Management Arrangement, Technical Co-operation and Bilateral Arrangement.

Under the TOR for the MOU, the Joint Border Committee on Fisheries Matters would make provision for appropriate development prospects and regulatory mechanisms to eradicate illegal fishing,

The propose MOU would recognize the status of traditional border crossers and address issues concerning their engagement in fishing activities with the view of developing regulatory and control mechanisms to minimize the exploitation of fisheries and marine resources.

Under the TOR, the MOU would have in place appropriate mechanisms that would cater for access to resources and trade and investment opportunities; establish common grounds for sharing of information and joint management arrangements; develop avenues that will create access to technical co-operation, which will include exchange training programmes to improve productivity in aquaculture and management of fisheries resources.

Region Discusses Tuna Management Options

A workshop to discuss critical issues relating to tuna management in the high seas was held in October in Honiara, Solomon Islands at the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) office.

The weeklong summit was attended by representatives from forum member countries, mostly small coastal states. PNG was represented by officials from the National Fisheries Authority, Department of Foreign Affairs and the Fisheries Industry.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss recent changes in the regional forum fisheries management regimes. This was basically a technical meeting in which scientists from the South Pacific Commission and other research bodies presented papers on the status of Bigeye and Yellowfin tunas.

The meeting also focused on the fishing effort, status of different fisheries, implications of vessel effort and gear on stock and the precautionary approach to management of the stock.

NFA Farewells Long-serving Manager



• *Outgoing Manager, Mr Pawut (left) being presented a gift by the NFA A/Managing Director, Mr Sylvester Pokajam on behalf of the NFA.*

The National Fisheries Authority recently farewelled one of its longest serving officers. He is Mr Lamiller Pawut, outgoing Manager for Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Division.

Mr Pawut is to take up a new posting with the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) in Honiara, Solomon Islands. He and his family, including wife Ovin Pawut, who is NFA's Records Management Officer, are scheduled to leave for Honiara in early January 2005.

Mr Pawut began his career with the Fishing Industry as a Rural Development Recruit in the Department of Primary Industry in 1979. Since then he rose to hold several senior positions within the Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources, including, Senior Surveillance Officer for the New Guinea Islands Region, as well as Principal Surveillance Officer before assuming his current role as MCS Manager for NFA.

When asked about his time working with the Fisheries Sector here in PNG, and more specifically NFA, Mr Pawut said it has been both "challenging and educational." He was pleased to have been part of the reform, which gave NFA autonomy, of which he describes as a "miracle" in itself.

He said since the reform, the massive staff reduction, as well as the increase in incentives, there has been a "steep climb" in productivity. He remarked that NFA should strive to maintain its autonomy by following the systems put in place.

NFA Managing Director Sylvester Pokajam said, Mr Pawut's departure would be a "great loss" to NFA, he described Mr Pawut as a strong leader, good worker and thinker, firm believer in enforcing and adhering to fisheries rules and regulations.

"Mr Pawut is valuable not only to NFA but to the Fisheries Sector as a whole in PNG. His departure would be a loss to NFA but we will still benefit through regional work involving FFA," Mr Pokajam said.

In the meantime, Mr Noan Pakop, Observer Manager will act as MCS Manager.



• *Ms Priscilla Maigu, Public Relations officer*

Ms Walters is a third year journalism student from the UPNG, who spent seven weeks of work experience at the NFA as assistant to the Public Relations Officer.

We wish you all the best in your final year of studies.

A big thank you to the NFA Management, Managers and Team Leaders for your valuable contribution towards the Fishing Line in 2004, I look forward to your undivided support in 2005.



• *Ms Nadia Walters*

NFA Promotes Sustainable Use of Resources

Steps have been taken by the National Fisheries Authority to enter into strategic partnerships with other institutions to promote sustainable use of fisheries resources, as well as safeguard the resources.

Fisheries Minister, Hon. Ben Semri announced this during the presentation of the final dividend payment of K10 million by NFA to the State on 1st December 2004.

Minister Semri said, with key donor and financial institutions namely AusAid, European Union (EU) and Asian Development Bank (ADB), the NFA has established basic infrastructure in Kavieng and Lombrum with others earmarked for construction in Lae, Alotau and Buka.

He said the NFA has signed MOAs with six Maritime Provinces this year and plans to expand to the rest of the Maritime Provinces in 2005. The basic purpose of the MOA is to formalize and strengthen the working relationship with NFA and the provinces, where NFA will also provide basic communication and computer facilities to the provincial fisheries divisions as well as assisting provincial Administration in building the capacity of Provincial Fisheries Officers.

Minister Semri said NFA had also recently signed a MOA with the Maritime Element of the PNG Defence Force in which NFA set aside K1 million each year to fund fisheries surveillance patrols in the waters of PNG. Next year the NFA will acquire two small surveillance crafts to be based in Daru and Vanimo to further strengthen fisheries surveillance in the border areas.

He said NFA in partnership with the EU Coastal fisheries development project arrange the participation of PNG seafood exporters in the EU Seafood Exposition in Brussels in March this year, and this has resulted in seven companies complying with the EU food safety and quality standards. One of these companies commenced exports to the EU market a couple of months ago.

"These are the type of assistance that has the potential to increase growth of the fisheries sector and in turn the PNG economy. If we want to see the 5 percent growth in the economy we need to see more of these types of assistances, support and necessary incentives," Minister Semri said.

NFA pays State additional K2 million

The National Fisheries Authority has paid the National Government an additional K2 million on top of its final K10million dividend payment for 2004, which was paid on December 1st, 2004.

The presentation of the K2million dividend comes only two weeks after payment of the K10 million to the State. When handing over the cheque Mr Pochon Lili, NFA Board Member said, in its efforts to continue assisting the State, NFA has committed another dividend payment to bring the total dividend payments for 2004 to K40million. Within the last four years NFA has contributed to the PNG economy a massive K113million in dividends.

Present to receive the cheque was Sir Peter Barter, Acting Minister for Finance and Treasury. The cheque was presented by Mr Pochon Lili, and Mr Augustine Moba, Acting Managing Director on behalf of Fisheries Minister Mr Ben Semri.

Upon receiving the cheque, Sir Peter thanked NFA for the contribution, saying such payments would not have been possible a few years ago but since the increase in investments in fishing industries in recent times, NFA, through its competent board and management has contributed greatly to the economy.

He also condemned the malicious and false claims made against NFA and the government regarding bilateral fishing arrangements, when he said such allegations most of the time are not substantiated.

The National Fisheries Authority makes ninety percent of its revenue from bilateral fishing access agreements entered into with regional countries, as well as interim agreements with locally based foreign vessels and US Multilateral Treaty and FSM Arrangements.