

MONITORING SYSTEM FOR DOMESTIC AND EXPORT FISHERY PRODUCTS FROM SAMOA

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1. Introduction:

The Fisheries Division's work program centers around the purposes and scope of the Fisheries Act 1988, which are:

- ❑ *to promote the conservation, management and development of the fisheries in Samoa;*
- ❑ *to promote the exploration of the living resources of fishery waters;*
- ❑ *to promote marine scientific research; and*
- ❑ *to promote the protection and preservation of the marine environment.*

Two of the principal powers, rights and authorities of the Director of Fisheries to carry out his functions under the Act are to:

- ❑ *Collect and analyse statistical and other information concerning fisheries;*
- ❑ *Propose management and development measures designed to obtain the maximum benefits from the fishery resources for the people of Western Samoa.*

Pursuant to Part II, Sections 3, 4, 5 of the Fisheries Act (1988), appropriate undertakings are to be identify from time to time to promote the conservation, management and sustainability of Samoa's fishery resources. In addition, Part I, Sections 3 to 14 of the Fisheries Regulations (1995) stipulated various forms of undertakings and actions promoting sustainability and improve productivity of fishery resources.

Accordingly, the regularly monitoring of fishery products that are exploited from our marine and inland waters becomes one of the Fisheries Division's primary functions. Through continuous monitoring, the sustainability of fishery resources is therefore achieved and appropriate conservation and management means are obviously identified and effectively applied.

2. Current Fisheries Monitoring System (FMS):

The present monitoring system involves the regularly collection, compilation (storage), collating and analysis of data and related information from various fisheries sources, particularly those of importance in the artisanal/commercial levels in Samoa. Subsistence concerning fisheries data are periodically gathered. The regularly monitoring of both domestic and exported fisheries has been and will be a major component of the Fisheries Division's Resources Assessment and Management Section (RAMS) yearly working program.

The RAMS regularly collects fisheries catch (species, numbers, weights, size and other biological parameters as necessary) and effort (number of fishing boats, fishing time, gears, methods, economics, etc) that provide essential and important detailed information for the formulation of proper management strategies to be applied to particular fishery stocks in Western Samoa. The data is essentially used for the following:

- ❑ *to assess the level of fish, crustacean and shellfish utilization particularly in the artisanal/commercial and subsistence sectors;*
- ❑ *to assess sustainable yields of particular fishery stocks;*
- ❑ *to monitor changes occurring in a fishery over time;*
- ❑ *to facilitate formulation of management measures;*
- ❑ *to assist in the formulation of sustainable fisheries developments;*
- ❑ *to determine the economic value and benefits of the various fisheries both for local consumption and for export;*
- ❑ *to evaluate performance and efficiency of a particular fisheries development project(s);*
- ❑ *to monitor status of exploitable marine and fishery resources;*
- ❑ *to monitor status and condition of marine habitats; and*
- ❑ *to determine nutritional benefits to the people of Samoa.*

Commercial and artisanal fisheries data are obtained from the Apia Fish Market, the Fugalei and Salelologa Agriculture Markets, Retailers, Hotels, Apolima Landing Site, Roadsides, Longline Creel Census and Fish Exporters. Local longliners submit their catch data and operation details on prescribed forms directly to Fisheries Division. In addition to the surveys, data from operations such as the aquarium fish, bio-rocks collection and beche-de-mer exploitation are also included. Another component of the monitoring program of the commercial/artisanal sector is the assessment of the existing applied fishing effort in terms of fishers and fishing boats (alias and canoes).

Subsistence fisheries data are gathered from surveys of household and fishers, which conducts every five years. Information pertaining to the subsistence level of resources utilisation, seafood consumption, social and economic benefits, status of the resources and the applied effort are also retrieved from the household and creel census. The general outlines of on-going Fisheries Monitoring System currently conducted by the Fisheries Division Resources Assessment and Management Section is shown in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1: General Structure of the Surveys and Databases on Food Fishery Products, Landings and Exports at Various Outlets

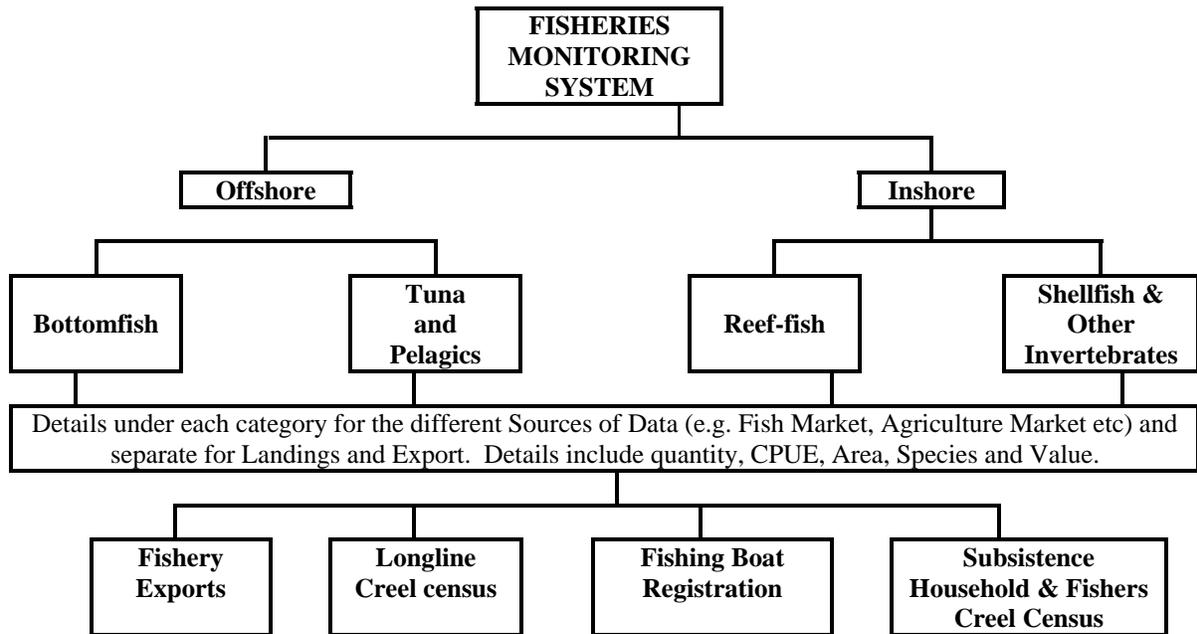
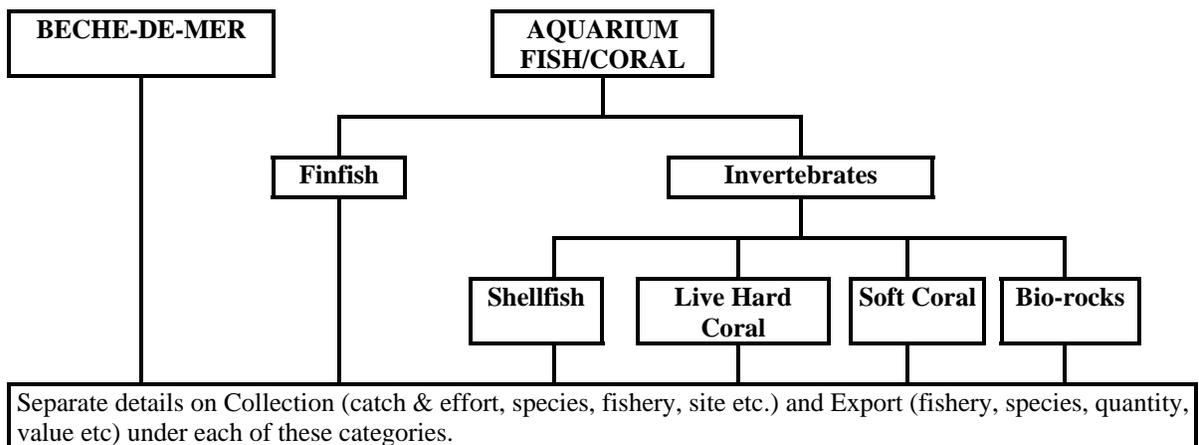


Figure 2: General Structure of the Monitoring System for Fish and Invertebrates Collected and Exported for the Aquarium and Beche-de-mer Trade



3. Export fishery products

The monitoring of export fishery products has been in place over the past five years. However, only recently (three years ago) a more effective monitoring system for fishery exports have been established after consultation and agreement with other responsible authorities (Custom Department and Quarantine Division). Monitoring efforts have also been stepped up as a result of a recent directive from the Cabinet mandated the monitoring of all exported fisheries commodities. With the given support from the Custom Department in particular, the Fisheries Division is now able to record most of fishery products leaving our shores for commercial reason as well as *faaoso* or *faalavelave*.

Prior to the exportation of any fisheries products especially in frozen form, all items are subject to thorough inspection and certification. Upon satisfying terms and conditions stipulated under the Fisheries Act 1988 and Fisheries Regulation 1995, a certificate is issued stating that export items are satisfactory adhere and abide with the give conditions. Subsequently, the Custom Department in particularly, would only issue their Export Entry certificate upon the provision of a proper certification from the Fisheries Division.

4. Certification of export products

Presently, there are two types of certification forms required for the certifying of exported products. Attached, as Attachments 3 and 4 are samples of triplicate certificate need for the exportation of food fish and invertebrates and for the aquarium trade. Prior to the issuance of certificates, an inspection of products conducted by members of the RAMS is to be carried out. Items are weighed and measured as well as their genus or species are identified. The certificate cost only \$2.00.

5. Data available and sharing

The Central Bank and the Treasury currently approached the FD for the possibility of sharing the available data in avoidance of replication effort. Furthermore, data and information pertaining to export aggregated by the Fisheries has better and higher degree of reliability than information acquired by the CBS and Treasury from export agents. Data that are now make available from the Fisheries monitoring system to the CBS, Treasury and many other agencies should they need.

Essentially, the present monitoring system is the only mean whereby fishery exports are gathered. Without it, the magnitude and volume of fisheries being exports will remain unknown. Consequently, economic and social benefits generate from fisheries will still remain unrevealed. Moreover, appropriate development and management strategies will not be realistically identified and applied.