

A P R O F I L E

O F K I R I B A T I

F I S H E R I E S A C T I V I T I E S

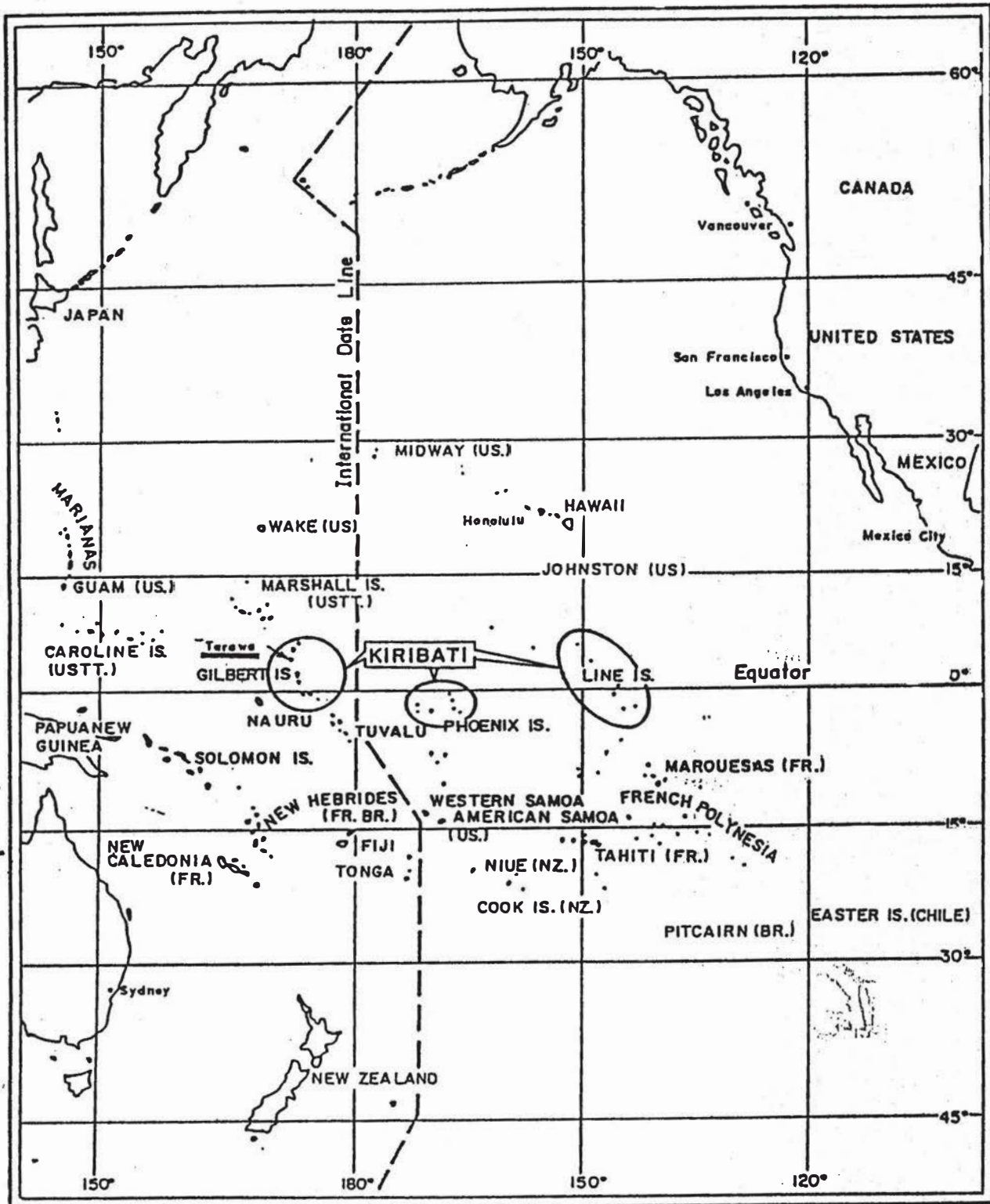
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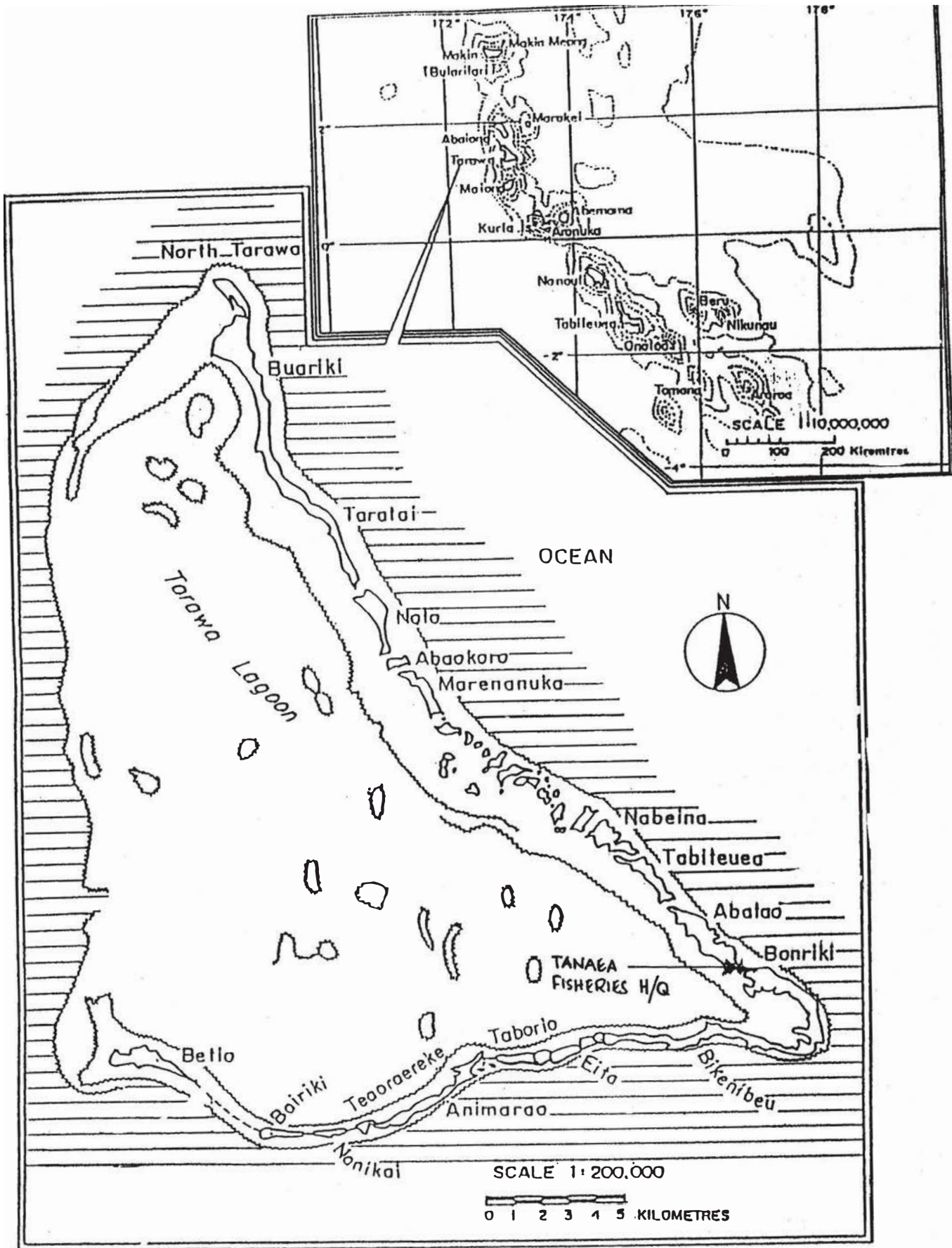
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MAP OF THE REPUBLIC OF KIRIBATI AND TARAWA ATOLL



CAPITAL S/TARAWA

EXTRACTS

Former Kiribati President "Hon Ieremia Tabai" address to the first meeting of 3rd Session of the House of Parliament 13th July, 1982.

"Fisheries development is considered to be vital to the economic future of the country. Government intends to extend its fisheries infrastructure, and it is hoped that together with improving the fishing fleet and engaging in joint venture will accelerate development.

Fisheries development on outer islands also has a high priority and there are number of assisted schemes planned which will provide employment and income. The proposed aquaculture development will not only provide a means of food production on outer islands but also for commercial fishing."

INTRODUCTION:

This report is initiately prepared as to meet one of the requirements by the JICA Cordinating Commitee as to present a country report. So this report will generally cover all activities carried out by the Fisheries Division under the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Development, Kiribati. Other additions are included to help to enlighten general knowledge on how the Fisheries Division is being run. The contents are outlined in this respective order. ♣

- (1) PHYSICAL FEATURES RELATING TO DEVELOPMENT
- (2) FISHERIES STRUCTURE .
- (3) FISHERIES EXTENSION PROGRAMME .
- (4) FISHING GEAR REVOLVING FUND .
- (5) EXPERIMENTAL FISHING
- (6) FISH HANDLING/MARKETING
- (7) SEAWEED CULTIVATION .
- (8) MILKFISH AQUACULTURE
- (9) COLLECTION OF FISHERY STATISTIC .
- (10) MANAGEMENT OF EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE
- (11) RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

1.1 Development & Physical Features about Kiribati

The Republic of Kiribati comprises three main groups of islands which are the Gilbert Group, Line Group and the Phoenix Group. These 33 islands are scattered in the Central Pacific Ocean. The total land area is 815 sq km. Most of these islands are of about 1.0m above sea level exclusively Banaba (formerly known as Ocean Island) which is a bit higher than the rest of these fringing islands. With very poor soil too alkalis as detected by PH method makes cultivating of variety of crops so difficult. Planting of coconut trees for copra is the only successful industry on land. In fact copra has played a major role for foreign exchange in which the country has relied on for so many years. The vast ocean of Kiribati becomes a new mode of the national government to concentrate development on. Local handicrafts also played an important part to attract tourists but this hasn't been very successful during the years. Phosphate mining on Banaba has run out shortly before her independence from British Empire in 1979 12 th July.

Since then Kiribati government put great emphasis on her future development which leads to the understanding of sea resources as the only solution to compensate for the phosphate ore. This could be seen so clearly during the presidency address to parliament discussion on 13th July, 1982. Please go over to the extract again for your interest.

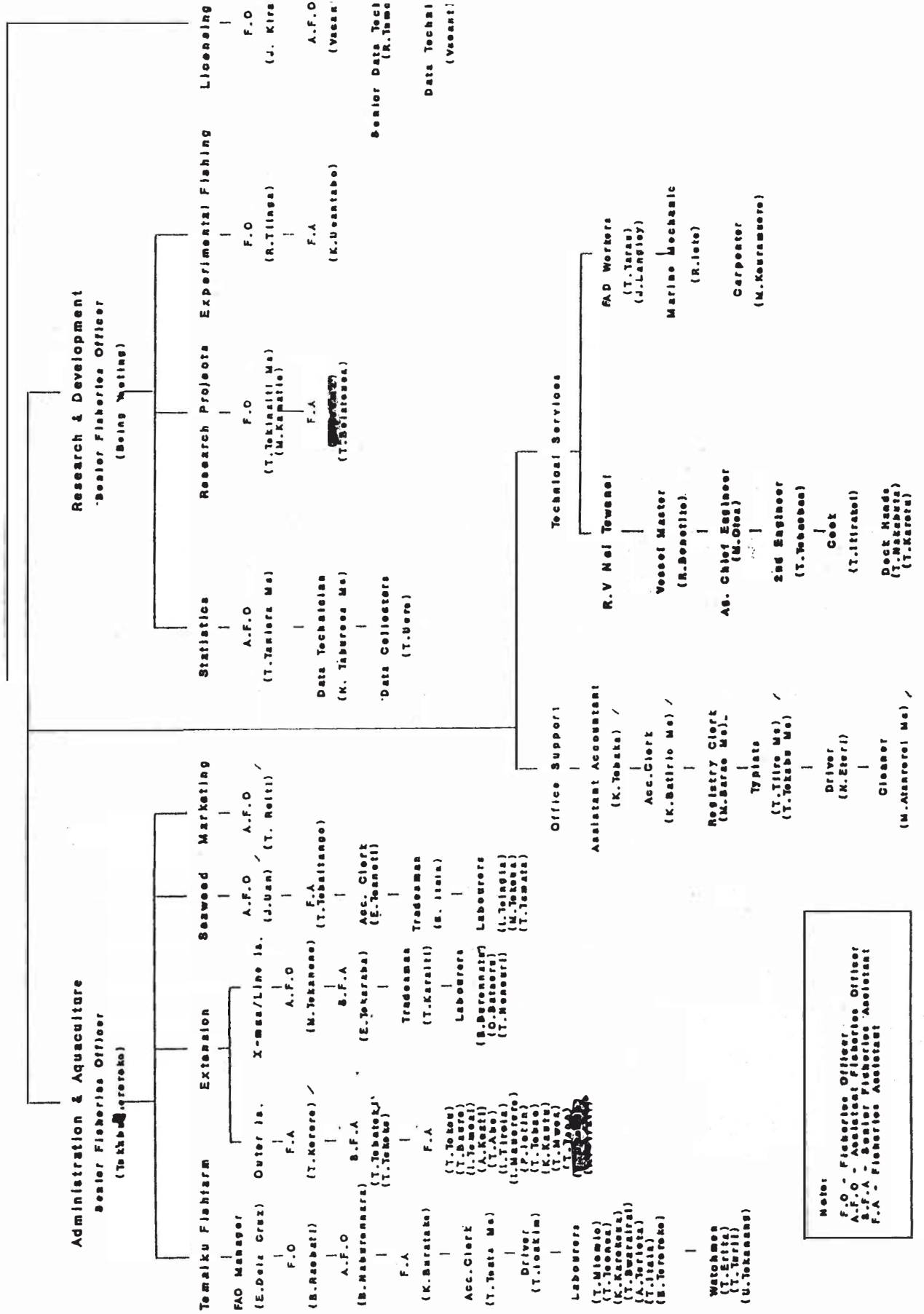
1.2 Population and Government Structure: Recorded population of Kiribati in the latest census of 1985 is about 64,000 with the growth rate of 2% per year. About 20,000 of that stated figure are living on South Tarawa which is the Capital. Like elsewhere, general administration is carried out on capital S/Tarawa. On outer islands respective Is. Council members are dealing with their own affairs and development which is strongly supported by the National government. In addition officers are sent from every governmental division to these rural areas as to assist in their different field and to keep order and peace.

2. Fisheries Structure: Attached is the current flow chart of the Fisheries Division in Kiribati. Please refer to fig. 1.

FISHERIES DIVISION ORGANISATIONAL CHART 1990.

Officer

Chief
(Tookabu Tilkai)



To name a few of fishing gear sources are as follow:

1. BELONG COMPANY, TAIWAN
2. YOZURI CO, JAPAN
3. FISHING GEAR CO, FIJI

However, the government is subsisting the project so that a continuous oversea ordering is maintained.

5. EXPERIMENTAL FISHING

5.1 Deep Bottom Fishing

The main objective of the project is to introduce new fishing techniques as to increase fishermen catch with the use of Handreels for deep bottom fishing and to make available information on deep bottom resources i.e. type of fish found in Kiribati waters. There are eight islands which are being visited by the project to carry out practical training of local fishermen with the application of handreels. Other components of this section are construction and deployment of Fish Aggregative Device (FAD) and evaluation of fishing crafts/gears used by fishermen.

- 5.2 FAD: Mentioning briefly about the FAD. There are 15 FADs which are being deployed on outer islands with funding provided by New Zealand, Canada and USAID. Catch records are sounding encouraging. Main species caught near the FADs are Skipjack and Yellowfin tuna, rainbow runner, marlin and shark. Dolphins are curious animals often seen swimming near and around these FADs.

6. FISH HANDLING/MARKET

6.1 Main objectives of this project are as follow:

- to distribute cash economy within remote areas.
- prevent urban drift, if the economy is well distributed
- to improve fish quality which are produced locally.
- to develop links with foreign markets to obtain foreign currency.

STRATEGIES:-

- motivate local fishermen to operate fish market for earning money
- develop market system on experimental basis as to study difficulties which may arise while marketing is being operated.
- to create PEOPLE AWARENESS on fish quality.
- monitoring amount of fish products sent to overseas.
- assist and encouraging private business who are keen to market sea products from Kiribati such as
 - Beche-de-mer
 - Shark fins
 - Frozen fish/lobster
 - Salted fish

Several guide books have been translated into local language with sketches to help understanding on

- salting techniques
- shark fin processing

7. SEAWEED PROJECT

Early this year, this named project has now become privatised company as part of a national development plan. However, a mutual co-operation between the company and the Fisheries Division is maintained as to secure international links with the existing company called Atoll Seaweed Company. It is significant to note that existing company hasn't been quite operational due to lack of fund. For the meantime the Fisheries is fully running the company. As part of the mutual agreement;

1. Atoll seaweed company is doing general administration.
2. Fisheries Division is assisting in technical side where study on biological effect is carried out and to assist the company to make good relationship with the outside world regarding export.

Recorded seaweed dried production from January to September 1991 is 805.417 m/t. There are ~~seven~~^{three} main islands producing dried seaweed. Total export value estimated ~~will be~~^{to be} \$402,500 US.

8. MILKFISH AQUACULTURE

It is initiately set up for meeting commercial demand for bait for pole and line industry and food fish for local communities and export market. With the close down of the tuna fishing company (TML) last year, fishing communities are now helping themselves with suitable milkfish size (fingering size) for bait.

Summary of milkfish production of 1990

Baitfish	-	Commercial fishing	- 1,474 p/days
Foodfish	-	Company communities	- 2559 kg

9. STATISTICS

As part of the National Development Plan 1987 - 1991, ~~is that~~ the Fisheries Division of E.N.R.D. is responsible to MONITOR DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE COLLECTION OF REVELANT STATISTICS THUS FACILITATING BETTER FISHERIES MANAGEMENT OF KIRIBATI. Therefore the Statistic Unit of Fisheries Division is currently involved in obtaining 'Base Line' data in order to monitor changes in the artsianal fishery with increasing population and development project ~~has~~ establishment on the different islands.

10. MANAGEMENT OF EEZ

The unit has done marvellous job in maintaining a good standard ability in mananging the EEZ.

Please refer to attachment (Fig. 2) for catch summary of the EEZ. The total EEZ area is about 3.5 million square kilometers.

11. RESEARCH

There are several ongoing research activities endeavouring to assess basic knowledge on sea resources for future development.

11.1 Giant Clam: Has completed phase 1 on stock assessment of the name spices (Family Tridacnidae) on most of islands of the country. It is funded by government of Australia.

11.2 Baitfish: Research on locally available baitfish species is still going on. New species have been identified. Baitfish samples have been collected and submitted on a monthly basis to CSIRO, Cleveland for otolith and gonodal analysis. The project is funded by ACAIR.

Gill netting: Catch assessment on fish landing is initiately carried out as to study dynamic on fish resources relating to heavy fishing pressure. It is only done on S/Tarawa since it has a very high number of population.

Fig. 2

CATCH SUMMARY AND REVENUE FOR 1985 - 1990
FROM FOREIGN FISHING BOATS

NO OF YEARS	POLE & LINE	LONG LINE	PURSE SEINE	TOTAL CATCH	REVENUE A\$MILLIONS
1985	3698	9532	1372	14602	3.1
1986	17383	4547	3669	25599	3.8
1987	7118	4694	10121	21933	2.1
1988	7581	4669	2626	15176	1.8
1989	19591	7714	2739	30044	3.2
1990	720	6733	73702	81155	4.3
TOTAL	56091	38189	94229	188509	18.3

Notes:

The high catch in purse seine in 1987 is due to the tripartite agreement with the US boat owners.

The increase in revenue in 1990 is a result of the Multi Lateral Treaty between certain Pacific Island States and the US which first started in 1988. The catch for pole and line and longline dropped but the purse seines increase enormously in the Gilbert Group. Revenue in 1991 is expected to reach over 11 million since we are expecting a high licence fee from the US in return for the bulk of tuna caught in Kiribati waters.

The highest species composition is skipjack.

All catch figures are in Metric tonnes.