Italians Enact New Fishery Development Plan

The Italian Parliament passed into law a fisheries development plan on 17 February 1982. The new plan, which required 3 years to develop, has a projected budget of about $50 million to be spent by 1985. The plan has the following three objectives:

1) Promotion of scientific research and the technological development of marine fisheries and aquaculture,

2) Creation of fishery cooperatives for the harvesting, processing, distribution, and marketing of fishery resources, and

3) Modernization of the Italian fishing fleet and shore processing plants.

New Fisheries Institute

To accomplish its objectives, the plan provides for the creation of several new committees and working groups, a research institute, and fisheries financing. These include:

1) An advisory committee on conservation and management of living marine resources,

2) A working group within the Italian Census Bureau (ISTAT) to collect and to compile fishery statistics,

3) A committee to coordinate scientific research and the transfer of modern technology to the Italian marine fishing industry and to determine projects suitable for government financing,

4) A central institute of fisheries research and technology to be established with a grant of $1.2 million and a still undetermined annual operating budget, and

5) Government financing of and subsidies to the fishing industry.

Central Fund

A central fund is to be created to provide low interest loans and/or outright grants for: Construction of new fishing vessels (but only if balanced off by grounding of obsolete craft); construction of fish factory vessels; modernization of existing vessels; development or expansion of aquaculture projects; development or expansion of shore facilities for processing, storage, conservation, and marketing of local and EC-imported fishery products; acquisition of containers and transport vehicles; construction or expansion of retail outlets for local fishery products operated by Italian fishing associations, consortia, and cooperatives; operating capital (up to 15 percent) to owners of ocean-going fishing vessels and for joint ventures between Italian and foreign fishing companies (or foreign government fishery agencies) operating in waters under the jurisdiction of the foreign country concerned.

The loan interest rate is to be 40 percent (30 percent for companies located in southern Italy) of the reference rate determined by the Italian Ministry of the Treasury. (In practice, this comes to an interest rate of around 8 percent.) The loan cannot exceed 70 percent of the costs, but, in the case of fishing cooperatives and consortia, 80 percent coverage of investment costs is allowed. The companies will also be able to request nonreimbursable grants for the same type of projects for an amount of up to 40 percent of the total cost; 50 percent with the concurrence of other local government entities; and 75 percent for initiatives undertaken by firms located in southern Italy. Grants may be obtained along with the subsidized loans. Another provision of the plan provides grants for the voluntary sinking of outdated fishing vessels at a rate of 400,000 Lire[1] per gross registered ton if no new vessel is built within 5 years and 200,000 Lire per gross ton if a new vessel is built in its place.

Financing Needed

The plan is considered ambitious and well conceived, but seriously under-financed. It takes into account the fact that the Italian fishing fleet of 4,000 vessels — over half of which are outdated — should be halved to 2,000 modern, well-equipped vessels. However, the plan provides no incentives for new construction, and it is believed that most vessel owners will find the incentives to scuttle old vessels insufficient. Prominent Italian fishermen also doubt that the incentives to encourage the formation of consortia and cooperatives will be effective in the highly individualistic Italian fishing industry.

It has been noted that the Meridional Pesca[2] company which has arranged a joint venture with Fass Brothers of Hampton, Va., to catch and process squid in the U.S. 200-mile Fishery Conservation Zone during the summer of 1982 will be among the first to petition for government assistance under the plan's provision for grants and/or easy credit to Italian firms engaged in joint ventures with foreign governments or foreign companies. Since most of the African countries where Italy now fishes do not offer attractive prospects for joint ventures with Italian firms, such opportunities are more likely to develop with

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.

[1] US$1.00 = 1,382 Lire as of 17 June, 1982.

[2] Mention of trade names or commercial firms does not imply endorsement by the National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA.

"stable" fishing partners in the United States and perhaps Canada. A joint venture with a Yugoslavian company is also in preparation.

Squid Allocations

The new EC-Canadian fisheries agreement permitted EC countries to catch as much as 7,000 metric tons (t) of squid in Canadian waters last summer. Since Italy, except for France and West Germany, is the only EC country interested in fishing Canadian-claimed waters, Italy hoped for a large share of that amount. Since the EC was behind schedule in making a breakdown of the Canadian fishery allocations to the EC countries, Italy was reportedly close to unilaterally declaring that it intended to take for itself 4,000 t and thus force an EC decision.

By May, the United States had not yet announced the fishing allocations for the summer 1982 season. As the U.S. fishing season began on 15 June, the Italian fleet was desperately awaiting word about its U.S. allocations to ready its fishing fleet. The Italians have complained that every year the U.S. announcement comes so late that the season is already partly over and Italy cannot catch its full allocations in time.

The new Canadian agreement has not decreased the Italian interest in fishing U.S. waters for squid. Italian long-finned (*Loligo*) and short-finned (*Illex*) squid consumption is about 30,000 t a year. The Italian fleet currently provides less than one-third of that amount; the rest is imported (mainly from Argentina where squid is fished by Polish fishermen).

The 800-tons of short and long-finned squid allocated to the Meridionale-Fass joint venture will be deducted from the total U.S. squid allocation to Italy, which could leave the rest of the Italian fleet with an amount too small to make its squid operations profitable. Italian fishermen now hope that Italian efforts to launch joint ventures with U.S. companies (and to provide gear and freezing technology) will be recognized when U.S. allocations are made. Italian companies are watching the results of the Meridionale-Fass project and plan two more joint ventures with U.S. companies in the Boston area in the near future. (Source: IFR-82/85.)

Mexican State Fish Company Tells Plans

Mexico's state fishing company, Productos Pesqueros Mexicanos (PPM), is the largest fishing company in Latin America. As a result of the government's emphasis on fisheries development, PPM has sharply expanded its fleet and production. PPM plans to process 260,000 metric tons (t) of fish for human consumption in 1982, 160 percent more than the 100,000 t processed in 1981.

PPM General Manager, Jose Bellot Castro, has set a primary goal of giving more autonomy to individual plant managers so operations can be better adjusted to local conditions. PPM also plans to study the possibilities of establishing regional divisions. PPM affiliates in Baja California and Sonora are already operating with considerable autonomy as Industrias Pesqueras Paraestatales del Noroeste.

The 1982 goals for the PPM fleet included finishing the construction of most of the 165 new fishing vessels being built for PPM, overhauling the fleet and establishing a preventive maintenance schedule, and establishing production goals for each vessel.

Processing plant goals for 1982 included opening the new plants at Lerman in Campeche and Topolobampo in Sinaloa. The Topolobampo plant will be the largest in Mexico and perhaps the largest in Latin America. They also planned to open the smaller plants PPM was building in association with private investors and cooperatives and install fish processing lines in the shrimp plants purchased from private owners[1]. Likewise, all of PPM's plants were to be incorporated into the Pepepez and Pescador programs which are designed to increase the edible fishery products available to Mexican consumers.

Another PPM priority during 1982 was to improve Mexico's marketing system, especially for tuna, sardines, and shrimp. Tuna is a special priority for PPM because of the rapidly expanding catch[2] by Mexico's growing tuna fleet. Most of the catch has been canned, but Mexican companies have been unable to export successfully much of the canned product. As a result, PPM is trying to promote massive increases in domestic consumption.

Sardines are important to PPM because their catch is also increasing and because sardines are an important element of the Sistema Mexicano Alimentario (SAM), a government program to increase the food products available to low-income consumers.

Shrimp is also receiving special attention and PPM hopes to market more domestically. Traditionally, about 80 percent of Mexico's shrimp catch is exported to the United States. PPM officials, however, were not satisfied with the prices they received in the U.S. market during 1980 and 1981. Some PPM officials reportedly believe that developing the domestic market will help reduce the dependence on the U.S. market. The February 1982 floating of the Mexican peso sharply increased the value of the U.S. dollar in pesos and, as a result, the potential returns from shrimp exports in terms of U.S. dollars may make it difficult for PPM to divert shrimp from export markets to the domestic market.

Bellot also indicated that PPM plans to promote the marketing of squid. While not as important as tuna, sardines, and shrimp, Mexican fishermen have recently developed a new fishery for giant squid in the Gulf of California. PPM plans to promote exports as well as the marketing of frozen and cured fishery products in the domestic market. (Source: IFR 82/70.)

[1]PPM acquired almost all of Mexico's privately-owned shrimp packing plants in late 1981 and early 1982. The acquisition was part of a larger government plant to restructure the country's shrimp industry. At the same time, privately owned vessels were transferred to the cooperatives.

[2]See "The expansion of the Mexican tuna fleet, 1981-1984," Mar. Fish. Rev. 44(8): 25-29.

Latin American Fishery Officials Listed

The NMFS Division of Foreign Fisheries Analysis, which regularly monitors worldwide fishery developments, has prepared the following list of the names and addresses of fishery officials in almost 40 Latin American countries. Any readers who have updated names or addresses for these officials are requested to send that information to the Division (F/IA-1), NMFS, NOAA, Washington, D.C. 20235.

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Barbados
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Belize
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Ministry of Trade and Industries
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Bermuda
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Bolivia
Departamento de Vida Silvestre, y Pesca Parques Nacionales, Caza
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La Paz, Bolivia

Brazil
Dr. Roberto Ferreira do Amaral
Superintendent
Superintendencia do Desenvolvimento da Pesca (SUDEPE)
Avenida W-3 Norte
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British Virgin Islands
Ministry of Communications, Works, and Industry
Roadtown, Tortola
British Virgin Islands

Chile
Roberto Verdugo Gormaz
Subsecretario de Pesca
Ministerio de Economia
Teatinos 120, Piso 11, Oficina 43
Santiago, Chile

Colombia
Dr. Gabriel Aceuedo
Subgerencia de Fomento de Pesca y Fauna Terrestre
Instituto de Recursos Naturales Renovables (INDERENA)
Ministerio de Agricultura
Calle 26 No. 13-B-47,
Bogota, Colombia

Costa Rica
Ing. Eduardo Bravo, Director
Departamento de Flora y Fauna
Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganaderia
Apartado 11094
Costa Rica, San Jose

Cuba
Jorge A. Fernandez Cuervo-Vinent
Ministerio de la Industria Pesquera
Apartado Postal 605
La Habana 1, Cuba

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Ministry of Agriculture, Land, Forestry, Fisheries, and Cooperatives
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Direccion General de Recursos Pesqueros
Secretaria de Estado de Agricultura
Centro de los Heroes
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Directorio General de Desarrollo Industrial y Control
Ministerio de Economia
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Grenada

Guatemala
Luis Fernando Martinez
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No information

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Panama
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Paraguay
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Ministerio de Agricultura
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Peru
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Puerto Rico
Inoel Rivera
CODREMAR
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St. Christopher-Nevis-Anguilla
Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Housing, Labor, Trade, Industry, and Development
Government Headquarters
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St. Lucia
H. D. Walters
Fisheries Officer
Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries, and Labor and Cooperatives
Castries, St. Lucia

St. Vincent
No information

Suriname
F. Vreden
Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Cultuurtuinlaan
Paramaribo, Suriname

Trinidad and Tobago
Hugh E. Wood
Senior Fisheries Officer
Fisheries Division
Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries
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Turks and Caicos
No information

Uruguay
Cpt. (C/N) U. Walter Perez
Director
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Ministerio de Agricultura y Pesca
Constituyente 1476
Montevideo, Uruguay

Venezuela
Lic. Carlos E. Gimenez
Director
Direccion General de Desarrollo Pesquero
Ministerio de Agricultura y Cria
Torre Norte, Piso 9
Centro Simon Bolivar
Caracas, Venezuela

Mexican Shrimp Fleet Transferred to Coops

The Mexican government has begun to fulfill a promise made to fishermen's cooperatives in the 1930's. The government is financing the purchase of all the country's privately-owned shrimp trawlers by the cooperatives and the purchase of shrimp processing plants by the state-owned company, Productos Pesqueros Mexicanos. The vessel purchases are being financed by the Banco Nacional Pesquero y Portuario (Banpesca).

Pacific coast trawlers were transferred in October and November of 1981. Gulf of Mexico trawlers were to be transferred in February 1982, but disputes between the owners and the cooperatives over prices delayed the transfer. Unlike the Pacific coast cooperatives, few Gulf of Mexico cooperatives own their own trawlers. As a result of the delay, many vessels were tied up in port during January, February, and March 1982. Reports from Mexico indicated that as of early April about 90 percent of the vessels had been transferred to and deployed by the cooperatives. The impasse has significantly affected 1982 Mexican shrimp exports to the United States.

A "productivity program" involved in the transfer stipulates that certain amounts of finfish must also be fished by the shrimp trawlers. Also, the shrimp by-catch will have to be taken to port. A logbook system is to be instituted to help define fishing areas and resources available, according to the Mexican Secretariat of Fisheries.

The Secretariat has prepared a 5-page report on the transfer of the vessels, detailing the procedures for appraising and transferring the vessels, the government's role, and how the cooperatives will pay back the government. A copy can be obtained by requesting "Mexican Shrimp Fleet" (IFR-82/51) from local NMFS Statistics and Market News Offices, enclosing a large self-addressed envelope with $0.37 postage.

Japan Expects Record Fall Chum Salmon Catch

Japan's 1982 fall chum salmon catch off Hokkaido will be a record high, according to a forecast made by the Japan Fishery Agency's Hokkaido Salmon Hatchery. The announced forecast is shown below by area in comparison with 1981 actual catches. (Source: FFIR 82-14.)

Japan's 1982 fall chum salmon catch forecast.

Area	Catch (1,000 fish) 1982 Forecast	1981 Actual catch	1982/1981 Comparison (%)
Okhotsk Sea	5,991.8	5,774.2	104
Japan Sea	1,303.8	1,112.0	117
Pacific Ocean			
Nemuro area	5,874.7	5,761.4	102
E. of Cape Erimo	5,678.1	5,759.2	99
W. of Cape Erimo	4,151.9	3,519.2	118
Total	23,000.3	21,926.0	105