

SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

EIGHTH REGIONAL TECHNICAL MEETING ON FISHERIES
(Noumea, New Caledonia, 20 - 24 October 1975)

AMERICAN SAMOA - COUNTRY STATEMENT

by

Dr. S. Swerdloff
Director, Marine Resources
Government of American Samoa
Pago Pago, American Samoa

1. The Office of Marine Resources sustained its efforts to define, develop, and manage the aquatic resource potential of Samoa. Although budget constraints resulted in a reduction-in-force from twenty-nine to fourteen staff, alternative measures were implemented to achieve major program goals. Federal grant awards from National Marine Fisheries Service (DOC), National Sea Grant Foundation (DOC), and Bureau of Sport Fisheries (DOI) constituted the funding base.
2. A major deficiency in the local small craft commercial fleet was corrected by the re-engining of eighteen boats, substituting diesel engines in place of troublesome high-speed gasoline units. These alterations resulted in lengthy tie-ups for a number of boats, with a consequent decrease in total number of fishing trips. By the end of the fiscal year, effort and catch per trip increased substantially.
3. Catch and effort data were collected each month from 8 - 10 dories based in Pago Pago. Sampled catches totaled 105,280 lbs. and gross revenues totaled \$51,917.02 for the 581 fishing trips sampled. These figures probably represent about half the totals for the entire Samoan fleet of 23 dories; thus, total landings exceed 200,000 pounds. Gross revenues averaged \$89.36 per trip and the average catch was 181 lbs. Bottom fishing trips produced an average catch of 139 lbs. while trolling trips averaged 237 lbs.
4. The final three-year segment of an extensive skipjack tuna survey was completed in FY 1975. The 50' survey vessel Alofaga undertook 51 trolling and 59 live-bait pole-and-line trips, for a total of 110 fishing days. Total tuna catch was 111,107 lbs, consisting of 99,312 lbs. skipjack and 11,795 yellowfin. Average tuna catch per trolling trip was 354 lbs, while pole-and-line catch (using minimal amounts of bait) averaged 1577 lbs. per trip.
5. With consolidation at Taputimu Farm, the baitfish culture program progressed rapidly in the latter half of the fiscal year. The facility consisted of ten brood tanks with approximately six thousand adult brood stock producing up to 5,000 fry per day.

The fry were transferred into three 10,000 gallon fry-rearing ponds and held until reaching bait size (1-1/2 - 2 inches). With these ponds already filled to capacity, construction of one-15,000 gallon and two 25,000 gallon ponds commenced. Water for the expanded facility is now available from a newly completed brackish water well at the farm. Further facility improvements include the construction of a storage building, addition of compressed air supply, and improvements in food preparation and feeding systems.

6. The hatchery staff now consists of one project manager, two biological technicians, and two maintenance/construction workers. This enlarged staff has made it possible to simultaneously improve the biological and mechanical aspects of the facility. With the installation of a new large capacity pump in early FY 1976, small-scale commercial production will become feasible. Definitive fishing trials were postponed to early FY 1976 to assure a maximum effort.

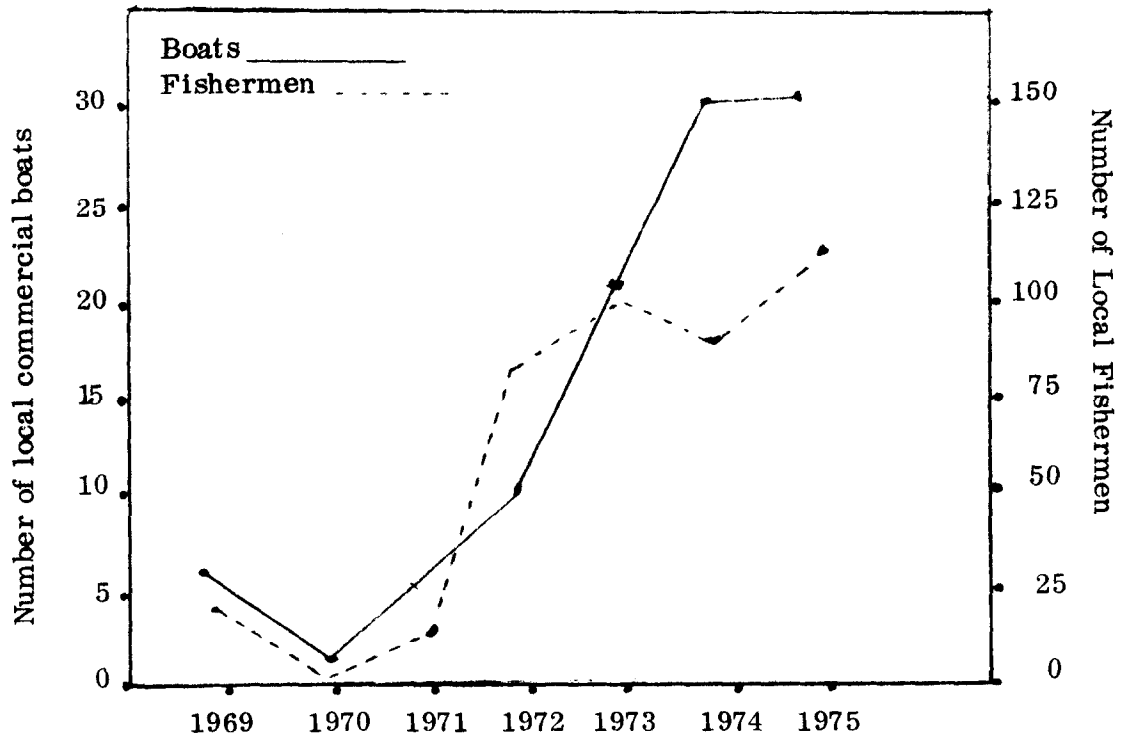
7. Collection of catch and biological data from the cannery fleets continued during Fiscal Year 1975. From a potential sample of 576 vessel-trips, 516 catch logs (90%) were collected and 420 albacore length samples of 50 fish each (73%) were measured.

8. Sport fishing surveys aboard the 28' demonstration vessel Autele increased to a total of 45 during the fiscal year. An average of 9.9 fish and 100.8 lbs. per trip was achieved with fish ranging from a 425 lb. black marlin down to a 1 lb. skipjack. "Aku" (skipjack), "Kawakawa" (little tuna) and "Asiasi" (yellowfin) were the most common species caught, but the potential for big-game charter fishing operations was demonstrated.

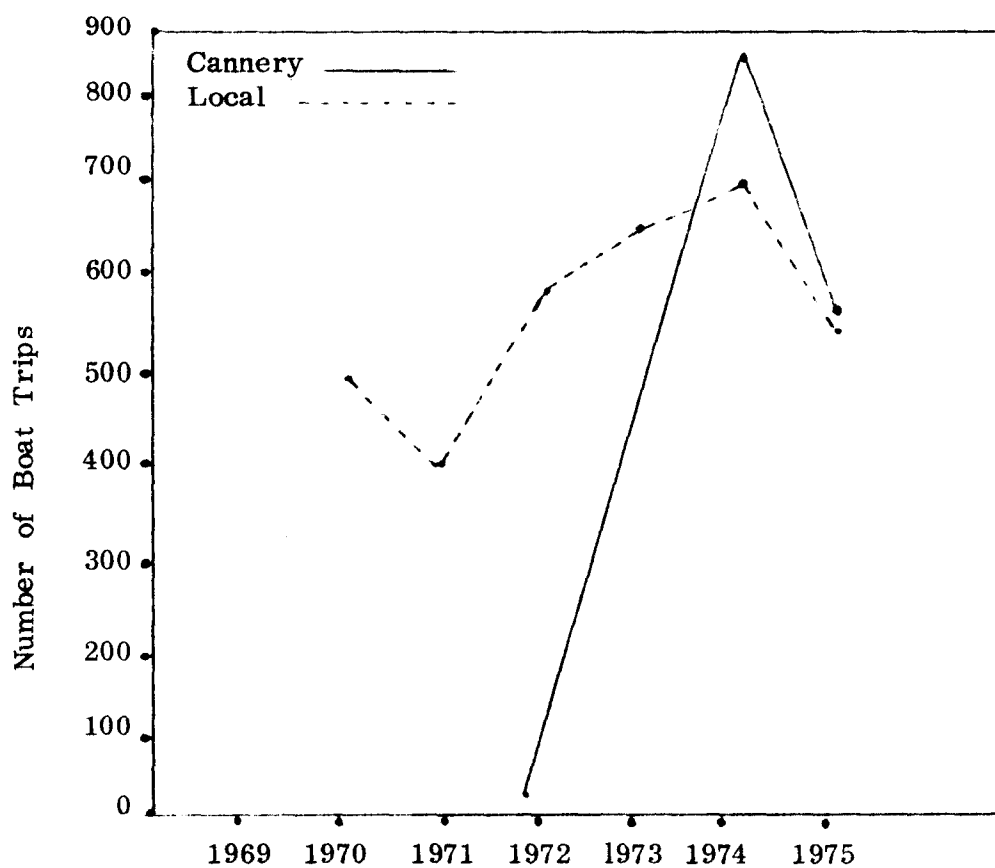
9. As part of the continuing survey of American Samoa's inshore reef fishes, a total of 615 species have now been collected, cataloged and added to the reference collection at the Jean P. Haydon Museum of American Samoa.

10. Construction of a fishing pier-marina at Malaloa and a dock for the Pago Pago Park launching ramp were also completed during the year. These facilities will allow increased access to populations of food and sport fishes along the south shore of Tutuila Island.

Number of Boats and Fishermen
in local fleet FY 1975



Boat Trips Sampled by Marine Resources
FY 1975



Local Landing of
Fresh Fish in tons FY 1975

