

Pelagic Fisheries Research Program

Project Management Report

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John Sibert

Program Manager

Overview

The FY2000 appropriation for Pacific tuna management was the same as for FY1999 leaving an uncommitted balance of \$500,000. A request for proposals was issued in November 1999, and thirty-one letters of intent were received with a total cost of approximately \$3.8 million. Full proposals were requested from thirteen of these letters, and eight new projects were selected for funding. Funding for most of the new projects is expected to become available to the University in August.

Output by PFRP affiliated scientists remains high. Roughly 23 publications appeared in print or were submitted for publication in the past twelve months, and seven of the forty-seven scientific presentations at the 2000 Lake Arrowhead Tuna Conference concerned PFRP related projects. There were 3 presentations on MULTIFAN-CL with references to the PFRP sponsored applications to yellowfin and bigeye tuna stock assessments. Several presentations of PFRP-related research were made to the 2000 meeting of the Standing Committee on Tunas and Billfish, including a half-day meeting of potential users of the Fishery-Oceanography Database on model specifications of the bigeye stock assessment project.

Continuing Activities

The Program was fortunate to obtain the services of Mr. Chris Anderson as editor of the PFRP Newsletter. Mr. Anderson has been very helpful in tracking down copy as well as editing material for the Newsletter.

Much of the work to produce the "International Module" for the WPRFMC Pelagics Annual Report has been assumed by Keith Bigelow of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. This change is a great improvement since Mr. Bigelow more direct access to the large database available at the SPC and takes most of the burden off PFRP staff.

Progress on Specific 1999-2000 Project Management Goals:

1. Conduct a new round of project solicitations.

Eight new projects will be implemented in the near future and implementation of at least one other project was deferred until results of the first eight begin to accumulate.

2. Implement recommendations of 1999 PFRP review panel.

Most of the recommendations have been implemented.

3. Facilitate international collaboration in research on pelagic fisheries.

The PFRP was host to a major international Symposium on Tagging and Tracking Marine Fish with Electronic Devices, February 7-11, 2000, at the East-West Center. Over 100 scientists and electronics manufacturers from a dozen countries assembled to present the current state of the art in this rapidly developing field and to discuss their latest results. Results from all of the oceans of the planet were presented. The species discussed included tropical cephalopods, salmon, tunas, marlins, cod, reef fishes, sea basses and sharks from habitats ranging from shallow inshore waters to the deep ocean. The Symposium proceedings will be published in 2000 as book by Kluwer Press co-edited by John Sibert and Jennifer Nielsen (editor of *Reviews in Fish Biology and Fisheries*).

An international workshop on the application of the MULTIFAN-CL stock assessment model to Pacific bigeye tuna was held 1-3 February, 2000, chaired by John Sibert. The purpose of the workshop was to review the results of a model application to yellowfin tuna (a PFRP sponsored project), review the results of Monte Carlo evaluations of model performance, and to plan the application of the model to bigeye tuna from all known Pacific fisheries exploiting this species. There were participants from NMFS (Seattle, Honolulu and La Jolla), CSIRO (Australia), NRFSF (Japan), IATTC (La Jolla), SPC (Noumea) and JIMAR. A workshop report is available.

The "Second Workshop on Daylight Measurements for Geo-location in Animal Telemetry" met February 3-4, 2000. The report of this workshop will be included in the Tagging Symposium book.

A PFRP principal investigators meeting is planned for December 2000.

Financial Status

Program expenditures by project are summarize and projected through FY2002 in the accompanying spreadsheet entitled "PFRP Budget Projections". The projected uncommitted balance next year is approximately \$265,000. Therefore, it is unlikely that it will possible to invest substantially in new projects during the next fiscal unless the level of the PFRP appropriation increased.

Problems

The NMFS "headquarters tax" continues to be a source of irritation. The dollar amount of the "tax" is roughly equivalent to the cost of the average PFRP project. In other words, this "tax" represents the potential loss of one project each year.

The difference between the NOAA budget line "Pacific tuna management" and the amount allocated to the PFRP has been \$400,000 for the past four years. It is not clear whether these funds area intended for PFRP expenditure, nor is it clear how to account for their expenditure.

Project Management Goals for 2000 2001:

- 1. Conduct a new round of project solicitations.**
- 2. Facilitate international collaboration in research on pelagic fisheries.**
- 3. Widen scope of PFRP Principal Investigator meetings.**