

GUAM COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

STATE: Territory of Guam

JOB TITLE: Commercial Fisheries on Guam

PERIOD COVERED: October 1, 1997 to September 30, 1998

SUMMARY

Commercial fisheries receipt books were used by five vendors during the fiscal year. The collected data was computerized and sent to NMFS in Hawaii.

BACKGROUND

The commercial fisheries program was established in 1979 to learn more about the fishery resource being caught and sold on Guam. The program was initiated by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). In the beginning, data was only collected from the Guam Fishermen's Cooperative in Agana, Guam. The program has slowly grown over time with many of the early participants no longer in business. As part of the long-term program plan, data collection and management has shifted from NMFS in Hawaii to the Guam Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources (DAWR). Program responsibility has slowly increased to the point where DAWR now handles data collection, computer input and production of commercial landing tables. All data collected is forwarded to NMFS for further analysis by their staff for regional reports.

OBJECTIVES

To monitor, analyze and report locally caught fish sales and related activities through the collection of vendor receipts.

PROCEDURES

The Guam Commercial Fisheries receipt books are provided to each volunteer fish vendor. When the catch is purchased, each cooperating vendor is asked to record the following information: name of the person, date, hours fished, number of fishermen, fishing location and fishing method. The assigned fisherman number is placed on each receipt after it is returned. A record is kept of all new people who sell fish and when they have consistently sold fish are given a number. The catch information is broken down into six primary areas:

- 1) Bottom fish
- 2) Reef fish
- 3) Troll (pelagic) fish
- 4) Invertebrates
- 5) Seaweed
- 6) Imported Items.

Each category of organisms has an assigned code number. Although there is a category for imported fish, the program is primarily intended to monitor locally caught and sold fish. There is space provided to indicate the number of items sold, total weight, price paid per pound, the value of the items, the total value of the transaction and any additional remarks. There are three copies of each receipt with one for the person selling the catch, the vendor and one for DAWR. Vendors are visited on a regular basis to monitor completion of the forms, collect completed receipt books, to check on errors and insure they have a supply of receipt books.

RESULTS

During FY98, vendor receipt books were collected from five active cooperating vendors on a regular basis. The collected data was entered, cross-checked for accuracy and all questions about the data verified with the vendors. Data representing the actual sold catch from the program for the fiscal year has been transferred to the NMFS office in Hawaii for storage, inclusion in the "Fishery Statistics of the Western Pacific" and the bottom fish and pelagic plan monitoring team annual reports.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop regulations to require the person representing the catch to provide an identification number to each vendor when selling locally caught and imported fish. This would give a more comprehensive view of the commercial fishery activity around Guam.

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