

Fisheries of Vietnam

by

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Abstract

The fishery resources of Vietnam have not been neither rationally managed nor exploited up to the present time. Fisheries organizations both on the government side and in the private sector were first established in 1957. Since then, fishery production has increased annually. The total catch in 1972 was 677,000 MT and if the rate of increased production can be mentioned is expected to reach about 1 million MT by 1975.

With the gradual coming of peace, it can be expected for a variety of reasons that the fisheries of Vietnam will be expanded significantly and become a bigger contribution to our food supply as well as export production.

At present, there are 340,000 fishermen operating 95,000 wooden fishing boats of which 55,000 are mechanized. The marine coastal area is intensively exploited by small boats while 20 large steel trawlers recently have begun to fish offshore. A joint project (UNDP-FAO and government of Vietnam) survey in the South China Sea and the Gulf of Thailand was set up 3 years ago and should continue to operate for some time to come.

The inland fisheries, the production of which represents one sixth of the total annual catch, is carried out in rivers, streams and flooded areas in the Mekong delta and also by fish culture in fresh water and brackish water ponds and in floating cages in rivers. With improved methods of aquaculture the yield of fish ponds increases constantly.

With a rapid expansion of the commercial fisheries, and rapid increases in exports, which tend to be concentrated on a few high value species, there may be a danger of over-exploitation in one area or another. There is also a danger that investment in plants, fleets, and shore facilities may be improperly timed and inefficiently utilized. Therefore, a thorough basic study of the entire commercial fisheries is needed, and a well coordinated plan for investment and development made. Plans are now being made to accomplish this important objective.

PRESENT SITUATION

Geographically well located, with a coast-line of more than 2,000 km in length next to a gentle continental shelf of about 1,200,000 square kilometers, and with over 4,000 km of fresh water ways loaded with plankton, Vietnam is favoured with both marine and inland fisheries

resources. But the fisheries industry in Vietnam was completely neglected during foreign domination, and then severely damaged by a long ravaging war. In spite of our great effort devoted to the fisheries industry it may still remain underdeveloped by lack of proper and sufficient technical and financial aid. The war has been less damaging to the marine fishery and it is more progressive than the inland fishery.

Up to now, we have about:

340,000 fishermen, using all kinds of fishing gear including trawls, purse-seines, gillnets, long lines, etc....However their techniques need to be improved. 95,000 wooden fishing boats, among them only 55,000 are motor powered. Most of these fishing boats are small and operate in coastal waters.

20 steel trawlers all of less than 300 tons, are exploiting our offshore fishing grounds.

In 1972, our production rose up to some 677,700 tons of which 500,000 tons were marine fish

81,000 tons were fresh fish,

54,000 tons were shrimp, and

40,000 tons were shell fish, including molluscs and squid.

In the same year, our exportation of fish products to Laos, Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan, France, West Germany, the United States, etc... reached about 6 million US\$. The products exported were mostly frozen shrimp, chilled and frozen fish fillets, fish sauce and derived ones.

I - MARINE FISHERIES

A - Offshore fisheries

With the aid of FAO-UNDP Vietnam has a project to survey the South China Sea and the Gulf of Thailand. The purpose of the survey is to:

Find and locate new fishing grounds.

Ascertain the possibilities of commercial trawl fishing for bottom fish off the coast of Vietnam

Help in the introduction of modern fishing gear and methods

Train Vietnamese cadres and fishermen

During the first phase of the project, the survey was made by two research boats, the Kyoshin Maru 52 (gross tonnage 312 T) and the Friendship (gross tonnage 114 T). Many data were collected to provide Vietnamese coast. However, we think that some of the component factors, such as location, importance of fish stocks and

species composition, and ages of various species etc... are of great importance for planning the future development of our fisheries.

A second phase of the project will help the achievement of:

Complementary prospect in the best fishing grounds spotted during the first phase to relocate and accurately estimate the extent of the concentrations of fish and shrimp and their potential productivity.

Improvement of the technical skill and the scientific expertise of the personnel of our Fisheries Institute.

Planning and supervision of the development of the future offshore fishing fleet, and related questions.

Training of officers and crewmembers (in various specialities) to be employed aboard the new vessels.

#### B. – Inshore fisheries

Most of our fishermen with their 50,000 powered fishing boats are exploiting the inshore fishing grounds. Fishermen now build larger boats, use all kinds of nets made of synthetic fibers particularly trawl nets, purse-seines, gillnets, and adopt efficient fishing techniques. Added efficiency may lead to over fishing and its detrimental effects. Fish catches are increasing every year and an improvement of the existing marketing system and methods of preservation is under experimentation. However the new marketing system meets the opposition of middle men and wholesale dealers. These men provide advance loans to fishermen and receive fish afterwards. They also sell fish on credit to the retailers in all markets throughout the country.

Shrimp catching is now considered a good business and many hundred fishing boats are trawling day and night to get shrimps for export. However the economies of this fishery needs to be examined in detail.

#### II – INLAND FISHERIES AND FISH CULTURE

With more than 4,000 km of water ways network and the south west region (Plain of Reeds) flooded every year by the Mekong River, the inland fisheries have a production that represents about 1/6 of the total catch of the country. Fishermen and farmers have also adopted effi-

ent methods to catch fish and now use small outboard boats to transport their catch to market faster.

Fish culture development, both in fresh and brackish water, is being enhanced. Government hatcheries distribute freely or sell at low price fingerlings to the farmers. Technical advice and appropriate loans to construct fish ponds for fish culture purpose have also been provided to fish farmers. In some areas where conditions are suitable (river, stream) fish rearing in floating cages is practiced. Thousands of acres of mangrove swamp and low lands in the south west are now under reclamation for Chanos chanos and shrimp culture.

#### III – FUTURE PROJECTS

The following measures are now under execution to increase production of both marine and inland fish:

To find new off-shore fishing grounds

To build off-shore fishing fleet

To improve the techniques of catching

To train fishermen and cadres

To provide sufficient (and in due time) loans to fishermen for better equipment

To gather data which can be used to protect aquatic fauna against overfishing at sea as well as in inland waters.

To dredge the river estuaries and build new landing facilities thus improving access to fishing ports.

To organize a chain of refrigeration facilities for fish preservation.

To improve the existing marketing system

To encourage local and foreign investment in fishing and related industries.

To assist fish culture technically and financially.

#### IV – DIFFICULTIES

In order to develop our fisheries rapidly, we have to overcome some difficulties, such as:

The lack of adequate fisheries technicians (fishery biologists, fishery technologists, fishery economists, statisticians, etc....)

The lack of statistical data and a basis investigation of the present situation and future prospects of our fisheries.

#### THE OTHERS

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#### Preliminary Observations on the Utilisation of Pig-Dung Effluent for Fish Production

by

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#### Abstract

In developing Singapore where agricultural land is

making way for urbanisation and industrialisation, carp culture is being looked upon from a new perspective. It is obvious that the wanton discharge of animal waste will