

# *Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority*

## *Annual Report 2001/2002*



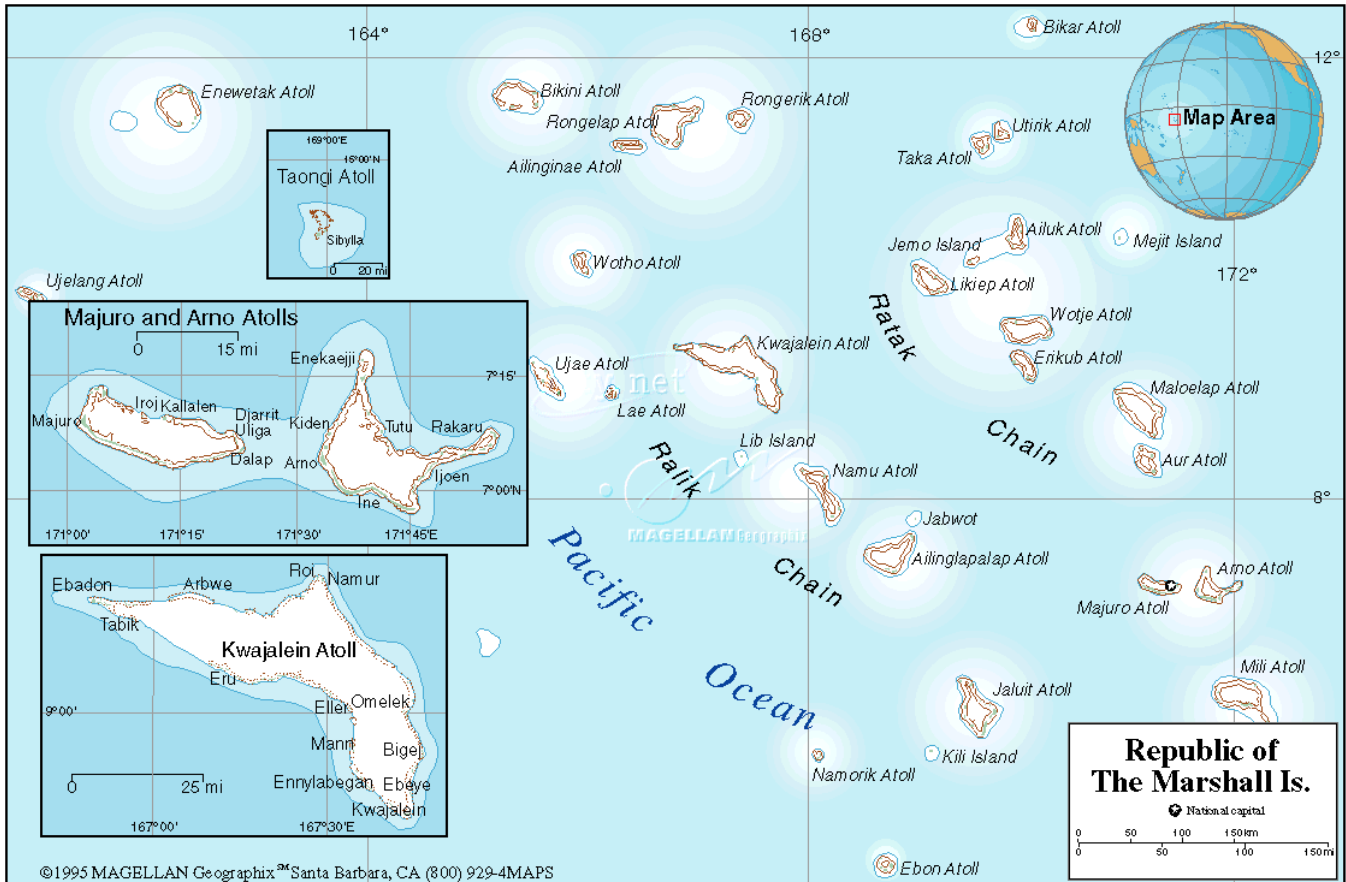
*October 2003.*





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## Message from the Chairman

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### *YOKWE once again!*

*It is with pleasure that I take this opportunity to submit on behalf of the MIMRA Board, the annual report for the year 2001-2002. This year marks the third year for me as Chairman of MIMRA Board and as I indicated and reported in the last MIMRA Annual Report, MIMRA continues to strive as a leading contributing government agency to the people, community and to the government of the Marshall Islands. For that, at least we should be proud.*

*The next step is to continue to strive and continue to make a difference in the development of the fishery sector in the Marshall Islands. While this is not easy, given the limited capacity, nevertheless, it is a priority, which is embedded and revolves around the daily routine of the MIMRA work.*

*We must face up to the growing changes that are sweeping all through the Marshall Islands. We must encourage adaptation where appropriate, in order that we survive and protect our people, our values and our way of live. Challenges in the applications of responsible fisheries development and management practices should and could not be exempted. Some changes in the application are obvious and sometimes are forced upon us. For example the ever fast growing and available technology, while others, comes in a non-participation approach, where we simply fall victims of global interventions, i.e. Sea Level rise.*

*Sustainable development continues to be the key factor in any emerging management regime. MIMRA continues to develop such measures so that the final outcomes of managing the RMI marine resources, can sustain the human population now and the future. At the same time, the marine resources itself is not depleted and not put in danger of depleted.*

*We realize this is a challenge given the growing population, as well as the developing fishery industry. While we are concerned with the problems that face the globe in terms of fishery management, we can rest assured of the efforts MIMRA is taking by participation in national, regional and international forums. These are very important steps in sharing experiences, gaining knowledge of emerging problems, as well as solution developments in key problems facing the region. Such is the establishment of the Western Central Pacific Convention for the Conservation and Management for Highly Migratory Fish Stock.*

*At the Community level, MIMRA continues to work with the respective local government councils to encourage participation by all stakeholder(s) in the long-term sustainable management of the coastal marine resources. At the same time, identify and facilitate introduction of fisheries projects that create income and employment opportunities based on the principle of sustainability.*

*This report has adequately encapsulated the activities undertaken by MIMRA over the last year. I have no doubt that it would provide useful information.*

*Kommol Tatta and God bless,*

*Hon. John Silk  
Minister of Resources and Development  
Chairman of the MIMRA Board*

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## Message from the Director

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### *Bar Yokwe!*

*I am pleased to make this statement on behalf of the MIMRA staff, whom I've entrusted to assist the Authority in carrying out its duties and responsibilities in full. This year marks the fifth year of operation under the organizational restructure recommended under the Asian Development Bank project. Initiated in 1995, the government embarked on a National Fishery Policy and National Fisheries Development Plan with assistance from the Asian Development Bank, ADB, to look at strategies to maximize economic benefits for our fisheries at sustainable limits, promote private sector led fisheries development, and institutional strengthening of MIMRA to enable it to carry out its role and deliver expected services relating to responsible development, management and conservation of our marine resources.*

*If we could pause a moment to reflect on some of the changes that were implemented under the reform program, I would first point out the effort to revise the MIMRA ACT. The revision was necessary first of all, to update the MIMRA law and legislation to the current international and regional standards and codes. The Act has given the Authority a big moral boost in the way it handles its business and in the way it deals with many of the issues that comes as matters of national, regional and international interests.*

*The Authority has many responsibilities under the MIMRA ACT, which includes putting in place a clear policy for the development and management of the marine resources to a sustainable level, promote safe and responsible fishery harvest techniques, as well as capacity building in country to meet the growing demands of the fisheries sectors development and management to complement sustainable economic growth.*

*The Institutional strengthening of MIMRA under the fisheries policy was absolutely necessary to enable it to carry out its role to maximize economic benefits from our fisheries at sustainable limits. While the domestic fisheries industry has experienced steady growth as evidenced by the growing and increasing interests by foreign companies wishing to invest or relocate their operations to Majuro. MIMRA has also been busy in facilitating assistance to the development of fisheries projects and introduction of fisheries management programs at the community level.*

*This report covers the various related development and management projects or programs that MIMRA undertook during the year. I hope it would be of most resourceful information for those taking the opportunity to read it. Additional information can always be provided at MIMRA if requested.*

*God Bless,*

*Danny Wase  
Director of MIMRA*

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## • COASTAL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

### • Coastal Fisheries


Coastal fisheries have been a traditional source for subsistence. Currently, the coastal and lagoon marine resources are a priority for community nutrition, long-term food security and income-earning opportunities. Two export-oriented sea farming activities are operating; 1) large-scale hatchery production of black pearls in Majuro started in 1994 and had its first successful harvest in 1998 and, 2) giant clam hatchery in Likiep Atoll, which is exporting, clams for the US aquarium market. Both companies are run by private organizations, the former by US-based Corporation and latter by the local community, with technical staff support from MIMRA.



A typical Marshall Island environment. Majuro lagoon, site for pearl farm.

MIMRA continues to encourage the development of culture fisheries and aquaculture for its potential to contribute to improving national fisheries production capacity and stimulate local economies. Furthermore, it is envisaged that the private sector will lead the development of culture fisheries and that environmental considerations related to culture activity

in line with the Government policy are of main concern.

Coastal fisheries in RMI are composed of principally of small operations, primarily in the outer islands, which are conducted within the context of a subsistence economy. These fisheries draw on the available resources in RMI waters as an integral part of the national economy and play a major role in supplying animal protein to the nation's population. The small-scale coastal fisheries operate primarily to catch fish on a daily basis for consumption by the fisher's own household, using traditional simple fishing methods. Accordingly, many households are engaged in these small-scale fisheries and, particularly on the outer islands, the bulk of the residents are engaged in fisheries; in Ailinglaplap, for example, 82 percent of household's fish and, in Jaluit, the percentage rises to 87%. In the outer islands, fish is the major source of animal protein, so that fishing is very active. In the urban areas, on the other hand, in view of the large number of residents working in the public and private sectors, there are virtually no full-time fishermen. Hence, the supply of fish in these urban areas is chronically inadequate. Annual fish demand on Majuro is estimated at about 400 tons, but at the present time, the volume of fish from Arno reaching Majuro through organized distribution channels is only 50 tons per year. In terms of the comparative prices of animal proteins, fresh fish is very expensive; 2.5 times that of broilers. Thus, it has been determined that demand for fresh fish in the urban markets is by no means small, reflecting a strong preference for fresh fish. 

- **Seaweed Cultivation Project**


MIMRA in cooperation with the Marshall Islands Development Bank (MIDB) and the RMI government will establish a Revolving Trust Fund that would enable local communities to initiate small-scale fisheries related activities. The outcome of the proposed project will allow local farmers to initiate seaweed cultivation in a sustainable manner utilizing start-up funds available from MIMRA. Local communities, especially in the atoll islands, really and urgently need another choice for income other than copra; each farmer receives only 11 cents per pound of copra with 50 percent Government subsidy.



MIMRA will identify areas suitable for seaweed farming. Above islands in Majuro lagoon.

In an effort to build national capacity in the RMI, technology transfer through training will be performed in all aspects of seaweed cultivation. The proposed project have started phase I in late 2002 have conducted surveys at six key atolls (Ebon, Jaluit, Mili, Ujae, Ailuk and Aur), using MIMRA staff and CMI students (internship) under the leadership of FAO seaweed expert. The trained MIMRA staff and CMI students will continue the mission nation-wide as a Government employee. The outcome of the pilot study would be not only to screen the performance of this introduced species

but also to train technical assistance for local farmers.

MIMRA has prepared the intended local business plan for the handling of seaweed in the Marshall Islands through the assistance of the FAO seaweed expert. With business potential nation-wide, MIMRA recognizes the need for resource management and regulations. The terminal statements from the proposed project will be of assistance (guidelines) to the formulation of a resource management plan by MIMRA and regulation policies by EPA. 


- **Atoll Project**

With a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable use of resources under the proper management, MIMRA with technical assistance from OFCF (Overseas Fishery Cooperation Foundation) of Japan, has started the construction of a much larger giant clam hatchery facility in Arno Atoll, similar in nature to the giant clam hatchery project in Likiep Atoll, and is expected to complete its construction in early 2003, for the purpose of giving MIMRA and the Arno Atoll Local Government advice on fishery management plan of reef fishes, mainly rabbit-fish (mole), and giant clams, based on the results from researches for the situation of the resources and fisheries in Arno and Majuro Atolls. Secondly but not the least, is to establish and extend giant clam grow-out farms for the formation of brood-stocks with cultured-clams.





Community involvement is crucial in carrying out sustainable fisheries awareness program. MIMRA staff above with RMI school kids.

Two of the OFCF fisheries experts are already in RMI for the implementation of the project that will commence operation in March 2003 through March 2006 at which time and after turning over the project to RMI government, MIMRA will continue to exercise the operation of the project. The project is called, “the Project for Inshore Fishery Resource Study and Management in Arno Atoll”. The duration of the project can be extended or shortened through consultation between both parties (OFCF/MIMRA). The project will also provide advice on the fishery management based on CPUE survey of rabbit-fish in Majuro Atoll. 

- **FDAPIN III Project (fisheries development assistance to pacific island nations)**

The OFCF and MIMRA as the parties to this arrangement, realizing the interdependence of both countries (JAPAN/RMI) in the field of fisheries, and taking into consideration the mutual benefit of both parties, have agreed to implement several projects on fisheries development in the Republic of the Marshall Islands for the purpose of further strengthening the amicable relationship between both countries through promoting cooperation in the field of fisheries.

The FDAPIN III project (fisheries development assistance for the pacific

island nations), as it is termed by OFCF, is to undertake the transference of technology to MIMRA-provided counterparts via on-site training and restoration of fisheries related facilities in RMI.

As is required yearly by OFCF and was requested by MIMRA to OFCF prior to the ending of calendar year 2002, ten (10) fisheries project proposals have been submitted for consideration and were later presented at the annual fisheries directors’ meeting recently held at the OFCF Suva, Fiji office. If approved, all of these projects will be implemented under the FDAPIN III Project administered by OFCF in 2003. The proposals are as follows and are in order of priority for 2003/2004, commencing in the second half of calendar year 2003:

1. *Replacement of engine for F/V Ieplap;*
2. *Restoration of an aged inboard/outboard “bumbum” boat for Lodo, Likiep;*
3. *Replacement of diesel-power generator for Ine fishbase;*
4. *Restoration of outboard engines for Maloelap project;*
5. *Repairing of outboard engine for carrier Jolok;*
6. *Replacement of the hull for carrier Jolok;*
7. *Replacement of mini-forklift for Majuro Support Station;*
8. *Replacement of MIMRA old warehouse/shack;*
9. *Replacement of solar batteries for the fishbases in Likiep, Namu and Ailinglaplap Atolls; and*
10. *Stock assessment of rabbit-fish in Majuro.*



- **Technical Assistance to the Marshall Islands**

Fisheries Development Adviser of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) was in the country in early April



2002, in response to an official request for technical assistance in setting up a long-line fishing project. The fisheries adviser worked with the Director and his staff to develop a work plan for the assistance. A memorandum of agreement (MOA) was also drawn up for both parties to sign.

MIMRA will use F/V Wabal for the project, and have commenced some refurbishment work on the boat as well as equipping the vessel for tuna long-lining activities. It is expected that this project will commence in early 2003 when the boat is ready for operations. A crew comprising of FNTC instructors (navigator, marine engineer and fish master), plus the SPC master-fisherman who will be in RMI to assist in implementing the project, will train the FNTC students on practical long-line fishing technique as well as *ikashibi* fishing within the atolls adjacent to Majuro. The training onboard the vessel will also include seamanship and marine engine for the students.




SPC Master fisherman, Michel Blanc, demonstrating techniques for proper bleeding and spiking a tuna.

One area of training that was felt could be implemented straight away was the basic STCW safety and sea survival training for the present group of graduates who have not yet found employment in the fishing industry.

In addition to the above training and their basic seamanship skills learned during their fishing training, they could find

employment on merchant vessels and approaches will be made to the various Manning Agencies in the region to see if they have employment opportunities for junior (basic qualified) ratings in any of the international shipping companies which they service.

The plan at this stage is structured to allow changes to the plan and the time line has to be flexible to follow trends in demand of the local and international shipping and fishing industry. 

- **Community Based Fisheries Management Program**



Mayor of Rongelap Atoll Local Government, James Matayoshi, presiding over the 1<sup>st</sup> Fisheries Community Based Fisheries Management Workshop in April 2002.


Catches of fish and shellfish are believed to have declining in lagoons and inshore reefs of many island countries in the Pacific region including the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI). Reasons for this decline are known to include over-exploitation and the use of destructive fishing methods. In the RMI, the over-exploitation has resulted from a combination of increasing size, and the use of overly efficient, and sometimes destructive fishing methods. The use of modern materials such as monofilament nylon for gill nets, for example, has made fishing effort more effective. In some cases, destructive fishing methods include the use of explosives and chemicals such as bleaching agents have caused damage to the marine environment and kill many

small fish and marine organisms. Other activities such as wharf and near-shore infrastructure development have affected the marine habitats for millions of tiny marine lives.


The general decline in fish stocks in RMI is now a concern of MIMRA especially where subsistence catches of seafood provide a traditional value and important source of protein. In spite of this importance, most island communities have disregarded the importance of their subsistence fisheries. Under the Marine Resources Act 1997, MIMRA has the power to delegate its authority to Local Government Councils (LGCs) for management of local fisheries. MIMRA has never been delegated due to many factors especially the ability of LGCs to instigate actions for the grant of this management authority. In order to assist and spearhead LGCs to meet their obligations, the RMI through MIMRA engaged the service of the SPC community fisheries advisor to examine options in order to facilitate the management of inshore fishery resources and local fisheries by island communities.



Involving the community is the aim of the SPC assisted program, center Mr. Ueta Faasili, Facilitator from the SPC with participants to the Community based Fishery Management Workshops.

The advisor has completed a design of a community-based project where island communities will be made responsible for managing their local fisheries and marine environment. 

- **COFDAS Project (Coastal fisheries development assistance)**

The COFDAS Project, which includes the OFCF-donated projects, established in Aur and Maloelap Atolls, have hauled in a total of 42,175.70 pounds of reef and pelagic fish representing some \$84,357.40 for the past twelve months. This means that \$42,000-plus have been poured into the pockets of local fishers to both atolls. The \$84,357.40 profits do not include the gross profits incurring from freight, passengers, charters, fishing gear, leases and ice sales. The major component of the projects include 15 fishing boats/outboard motors, ice making machine, containerized cold storage, fishing gear, insulated boxes, and transport vessel. 

- **JICA Project (Japan International Cooperation Agency)**

Aside from the fishery support stations in Majuro and Ebeye, including the fishbases in Likiep, Namu and Ailinglaplap Atolls, the Government of Japan (through JICA) had financed a coastal fisheries project in Jaluit Atoll. The objectives of the project is to promote fishing activities and make shipment of fresh fish to respond to fish demand in Majuro Atoll and Kili Island through providing a production and marketing system for coastal fisheries on Jaluit, and to stimulate the local economy of the atoll. It is also to contribute to improving present fish marketing conditions in Majuro and Kili.


The main facility of the project is located in Jabwor, and have started operation in 2002. For the last twelve months the project has raised \$34,031.35 in revenues from fish, passengers, charters, rentals, cold storage and ice. The volume of catches from the local fishers is totaled at 9,341.90 pounds from eight fishing communities within the atoll.






- **AAFA Project (Arno Atoll Fishery Association)**

The coastal fisheries development project for the outer islands was launched on Arno Atoll with the objective of commercializing the fishing industry of the outer islands. Under this project, the Arno Atoll Fishery Association (AAFA), which was organized under the aegis of MIMRA, buys the fish caught around Arno Atoll from the fishers and transports it on a regular basis (three times per week) to the consuming market in Majuro for sale. The catch volume from AAFA in the last twelve months stands at 46,462.57 pounds of reef and pelagic fish totaling an amount of \$53,130.38 in revenues, not including other incomes derived from the project. However, it is reported that the revenues combined totals \$91,957.04 representing freight, passengers, etc. The project itself is self-financing, and has employed six locals since 1989 with continued technical staff support from MIMRA.

At present, AAFA supervises operations from the purchase of catches at Arno and Ine to the sale of fish in Majuro. However, with respect to sales in Majuro, MIMRA coastal fisheries staff, which has supervising responsibilities for the Arno operation, are stationed in Majuro. Thus much of the AAFA operation in marketing field in Majuro depends on MIMRA for direction and guidance. 

- **Ebeye and Outer-island Projects**

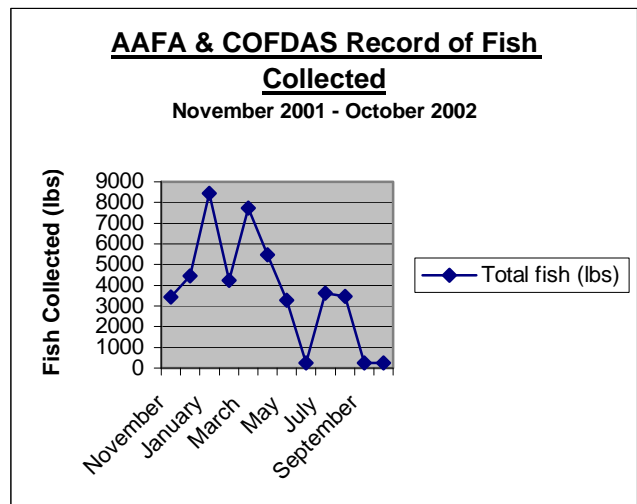
The so-called ‘the Project for Improvement of the Fish Marketing System in the Outer islands’, continues to provide income generations to the local fishers in Likiep, Namu and Ailinglaplap Atolls through the established fish marketing system in Ebeye. The support station in Ebeye buys fish through F/V Ieplap from these atolls for resale to

Ebeye consumers. F/V Ieplap is the main pillar to these projects because it buys and transports fish from these atolls to Ebeye on a regular basis (3x/mo). Although records of fish caught and sold are not provided in this report, it can be estimated that a total of 567,000 pounds of reef and pelagic fish had been hauled in from these projects since 1994, the year these projects were executed. This means that approximately \$1.1 millions (gross profits) had already been digested from these projects through the marketing system that was designed for the implementation plan. 



**Coastal Fishery DATA**

**Chart 1:**



COFDAS (Coastal Fisheries Development Assistance):

The COFDAS project is a series of cooperative programs administered by the Overseas Fisheries Cooperation (OFCF), from Japan, in which experts are dispatched to nations concerned in the Pacific. These projects are designed to contribute to the development of the coastal fisheries through the implementation of comprehensive technical cooperation encompassing fish harvesting and handling, production, processing, distribution, consumption and engine repairs and maintenance, refrigeration, fiberglass works, training, etc.

The mini-fishbase in Tobal, Aur Atoll (established 2000) is servicing the local fishermen through the provisions of ice, fishing boats, fishing gear, fuel and other fisheries related needs. The construction of the fishbase and other components of the project were financed by the COFDAS project administered by the OFCF. The project also provides income to the fishers through the buying arrangement scheme established by OFCF and MIMRA. The transport vessel locally known as 'LENTANIR' services the fishbase in Aur Atoll. The vessel, transporting cargo and passengers in addition to fish, also services the fishbase in Tarawa, Maloelap Atoll.

- **Arno Atoll Fisheries Project (AAFA):**

The Arno Atoll Fisheries Assistance (AAFA) was a pilot project provided by the government of Japan through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Overseas Fisheries Cooperative Foundation (OFCF). The project includes the provision of landing facilities (jetties, small freezer storage, generators, fishing boats, transport boats, fishing supplies, etc.) as well as fisheries experts. Arno Atoll is serviced by 'JOLOK' and 'ALELE' and in addition to transporting fish, the vessels are known to be chartered and transport cargo and passenger. Revenue generated through

charter trips and passenger/cargo is pretty stable coming in from Arno but a lot coming from Majuro to Arno (chart 5 and 6).

In Chart 1, the data of fish collected from both AAFA and COFDAS is high during the first part of the year. The latter half of the graph ranges from 200 – 2000 lbs of fish that was collected. Due to technical problems faced with the computer system in the Marketing Office, the large differences could be due to lost information or just the fact that less fish were caught during certain months of the year.

Chart 2 reflects the fish harvested through AAFA. There are 4 different Grades of fish and each grade differs in price bought from the fishermen (see table 1). From January to May, Grade D fish are at the highest in pounds harvested then slowly level off at around 250 lbs for the rest of the year. The same goes with the other grades of fish. They reach maximum numbers at certain months and level off at a lower number. This could be a sign of over-exploitation on the part of the fishermen.

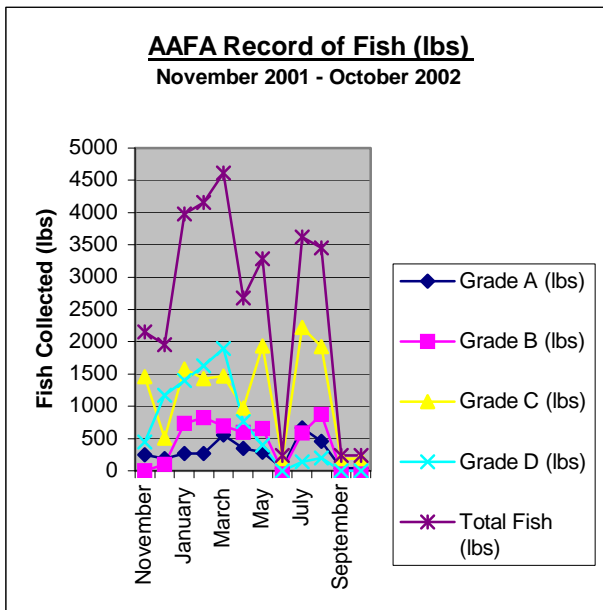
Comparing AAFA and COFDAS, AAFA brings in more fish per month than does COFDAS in spite of the fact that COFDAS consists of the fishbases in Maloelap and Aur Atolls. Arno Atoll is closer to Majuro than both Maloelap and Aur thus frequently bringing in fish from Arno. COFDAS does not bring in fish EVERY month (chart 3) due to improper storage of the fish harvested.

Lobsters collected this year (chart 4) were only in the months of December to August. An average of 33 lobsters were collected per month during this time with the largest weight harvested at 77.9 lbs and the lowest at 4 lbs. Even though numbers were not recorded through MIMRA in regards to lobsters during the months of September to November,

lobsters were sold by privately through other means.

In order to prevent the fish from depleting, it will be important to note that we should enforce fishing restrictions in regards to size regulations and seasons for certain fish. This way, a source of income for many will not vanish in the near future.

**Chart 2:**



**Table 1: AAFA Fish Grade Collection**

Grade A (lbs)	250	187	270	267	554	349	292	42	669	453	42	42
Grade B (lbs)	0	95	738	828	697	592	654	0	587	872	0	0
Grade C (lbs)	1456	503	1581	1431	1468	974	4938	193	2224	1927	193	193
Grade D (lbs)	450	1172	1394	1628	1894	761	395	0	137	197	0	0
<b>Total Fish (lbs)</b>	<b>2156</b>	<b>1957</b>	<b>3983</b>	<b>4154</b>	<b>4613</b>	<b>2676</b>	<b>3279</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>3617</b>	<b>3449</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>235</b>
Lobster		24	27	77.9	43	4	17	0	33	40	0	0
Iu	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ni	0	0	314	341	1596	1022	1016	253				
Pinana/Ma/etc.	0	0	1040	413	398	355	253	253				

<b>Grade A</b>	<b>Grade B</b>	<b>Grade C</b>	<b>Grade D</b>	<b>Others</b>
<i>\$1 - \$1.10</i>	<i>\$0.95</i>	<i>\$0.85</i>	<i>\$0.50 - \$0.70</i>	<i>\$0.10 - \$0.30</i>
<b>Mole</b> ( <i>Siganus argenteus</i> ) <b>Iool</b> ( <i>Crenimugil crenilabis</i> ) <b>Bejrok</b> ( <i>Kyphosus cinerascens</i> ) <b>Muramur</b> ( <i>Siganus punctatus</i> ) <b>Aotak</b> ( <i>Ellochelon vaigiensis</i> )	<b>Jato</b> ( <i>Lutjanus sp</i> ) <b>Jera</b> ( <i>Sargocentron spiniferum</i> ) <b>Mon</b> (killep) ( <i>Myripristis sp</i> ) <b>Bwilak</b> ( <i>Naso lituratus</i> ) <b>Mone</b> ( <i>Naso lituratus</i> ) <b>Lejabwil</b> ( <i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i> ) <b>Ikaidik</b> ( <i>Elagatis bipinnulatus</i> ) <b>Looj</b> (false albacore)	<b>Dijin</b> ( <i>Lethrinus obsoletus</i> ) <b>Rewa</b> – ( <i>Gnathanodon speciosus</i> ) <b>Kuro</b> – ( <i>Epinephelus polyphkadion</i> ) <b>Mejmej</b> ( <i>Gymnocranius microdon</i> ) <b>Berak</b> – ( <i>Lethrinus erythracanthus</i> ) <b>Mojani</b> – ( <i>Epinephelus coioides</i> ) <b>Walolo</b> – ( <i>Variola louti</i> ) <b>Molmol</b> – ( <i>Scober japonicus</i> ) <b>Bati</b> ( <i>Selar crumenophthalmus</i> ) <b>Kuban</b> – ( <i>Acanthurus triostegus</i> ) <b>Jo</b> (all type) ( <i>Mulloidichthys vanicolensis</i> , <i>Parupeneus barberinus</i> ) <b>Net</b> – ( <i>Lethrianus xanthochilus</i> ) <b>Lojebjeb</b> – ( <i>Epinephelus lanceolatus</i> , <i>Epinephelus maculatus</i> ) <b>Ilmok</b> – ( <i>Gerres baconensis</i> ) <b>Lol</b> – ( <i>Priacanthus cruentatus</i> ) <b>Atkadu</b> –	<b>Jojo</b> – ( <i>Exocoetidae spp.</i> ) <b>Mera</b> – ( <i>Chlorurus sordidus</i> ) <b>Ekmouj</b> – ( <i>Hipposcarus longiceps</i> ) <b>Bataktaj</b> (no take) – ( <i>Naso brevirostris</i> ) <b>Al</b> – (kingfish) <b>Koko</b> – ( <i>Corphaena hippurus</i> ) <b>Ael</b> – ( <i>Acanthurus olivaceous</i> ) <b>Utot</b> – ( <i>Chaetodon auriga</i> ) <b>Tou</b> – ( <i>Trachurops crumenophthalmus</i> ) <b>Mamo</b> – ( <i>Herklotsichthys quadrimaculatus</i> ) (all fishes not listed in A-C)	Iu- germinated coconut Ni - coconut Pinana - banana Ma - breadfruit (other local foods)

		( <i>Polydactylus sexfilis</i> ) <b>Momo</b> - ( <i>Epinephelus hexagonatus</i> )		
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**Table 2: COFDAS Fish Collection**

Grade	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
A (lbs)	95	519	409	207	93	281	0	0	0	14	14	14
B (lbs)	1174	1966	4056	255	3018	0	0	0	0	0	750	750
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1269</b>	<b>2485</b>	<b>4465</b>	<b>77.9</b>	<b>3111</b>	<b>2810</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>764</b>

**Table 3: AAFA & COFDAS TOTAL FISH**

	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
Total	3425	4442	8448	4231.9	7724	5486	3279	235	3617	3449	235	235
<b>Grand Total for November 2001 – October 2002 (lbs)</b>										<b>44,806.9</b>		

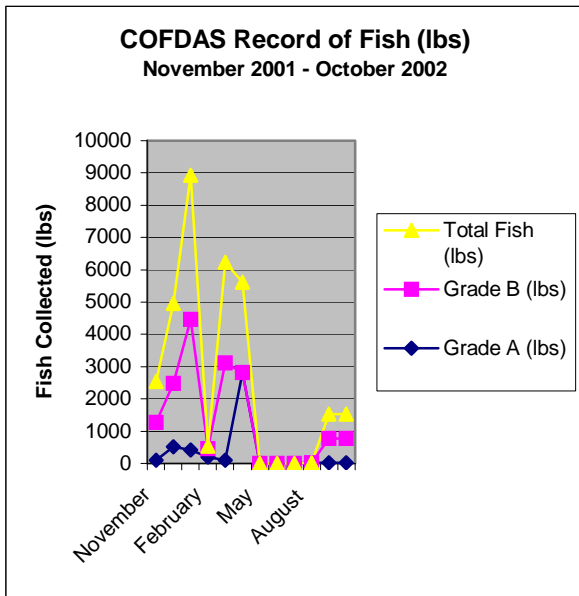


Top: red snapper, known locally as ‘JATO’,  
A very popular fish. Right: Assorted Cods.  
Bottom: Squirrelfish

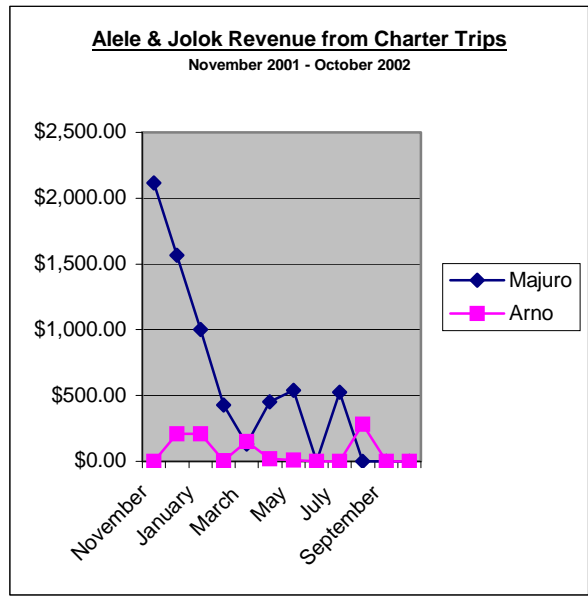




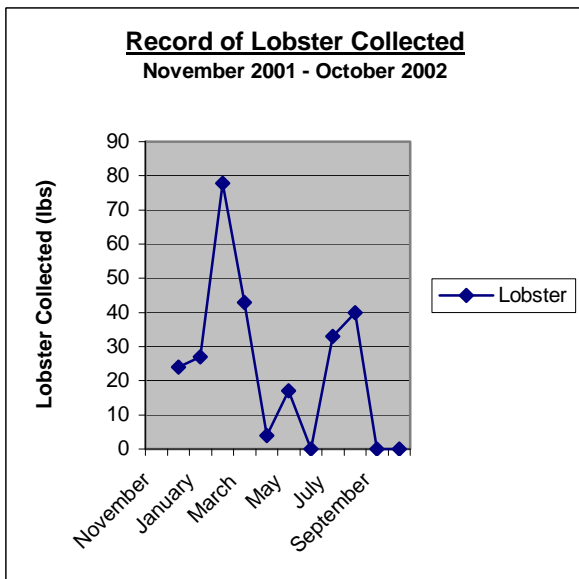
**Chart 3:**



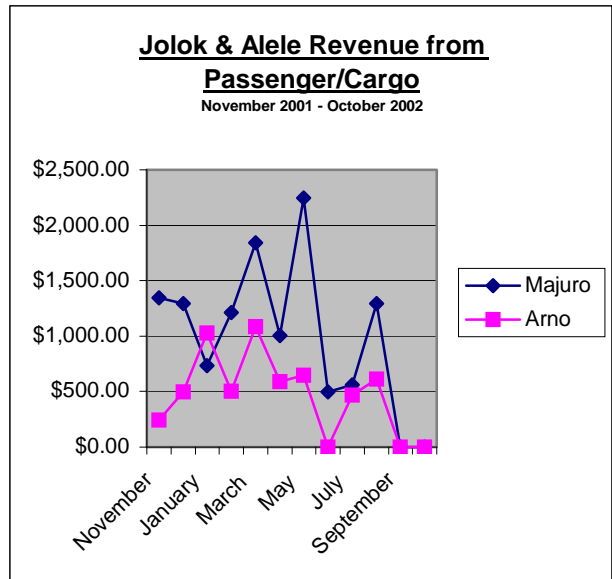
**Chart 5:**



**Chart 4:**



**Chart 6:**



**Table 4: Jolok & Alele Revenue**

Jolok & Alele Revenue November 2001 – October 2002												
	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October
Passenger & Cargo												
Majuro	\$1346.75	\$1291.05	\$733.00	\$1212.00	\$1839.25	\$1007.00	\$2245.04	\$496.00	\$560.95	\$1294.75	\$0.00	\$0.00
Arno	\$241.25	\$498.50	\$1026.25	\$503.75	\$1082.65	\$587.50	\$645.00	\$0.00	\$466.26	\$613.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Charter Trip												
Majuro	\$2115.00	\$1565.00	\$1000.00	\$430.00	\$133.00	\$450.00	\$538.50	\$0.00	\$525.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Arno	\$0.00	\$210.00	\$210.00	\$3.00	\$150.00	\$20.00	\$11.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$280.75	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total	\$3703.00	\$3374.55	\$2969.25	\$2148.75	\$3204.90	\$2064.50	\$3440.04	\$496.00	\$1552.21	\$2188.5	\$0.00	\$0.00



-end-

## • OCEANIC AND INDUSTRIAL AFFAIRS

The Oceanic and Industrial affairs is the division responsible for;

1. Administration and issuance of offshore fishing licenses to foreign, locally based foreign fishing boats, as well as re-search activities, conducted within the RMI Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).
2. Acquisition, handling and provisioning of Fisheries data, with respect to the operations of the licensed fleet.
3. Liaising, Communicating and cooperating with the Secretariat of the Pacific Communities and the Forum Fisheries Agency, etc., with respect to activities, programs, in MIMRA's capacity as the technical contact for regional organizations.
4. Conducting monitoring, control and surveillance activities at the national level, in collaboration and cooperation with the Sea Patrol, Environmental Protection Agency, Local Governments, for information and operation of the fishery in the RMI, as well as participating in national, regional and international monitoring, control and surveillance schemes.
5. Administering the Port sampling and Observer Program.
6. Promoting MIMRA Act, policy, and regulations, through Foreign Investment(s) and Access Agreement(s) in Fisheries in the RMI.

At the outset, the Division undertakes to look after the area from where the Coastal jurisdiction ends, out to the 200 Nautical miles zone, although specific responsibilities also falls in the areas of coastal jurisdiction, i.e., Transshipment

operation. In the case of Majuro, where foreign boats called in port for crewing, fueling, provisioning, and transshipping, boarding and inspection, is also done. Majuro is also the home-port for the Locally based foreign boats, so the emphasis on acquisition of fishing data is heavy. These efforts require new and improved measures and capacity to keep abreast of the operation, as well as properly documenting the progress of the fishing activity and the related activities derived. This national effort provides information for the management of the fishery at the national and regional level.

Some of the highlights of the division's activity for the period include the re-establishment of the longline Fishbase. As reported in the last annual report, the base has commenced with 40 odd Longline (fresh chilled) vessels, producing about 2,000 tons of mixed tuna so far. The transshipment activity continues at a steady increase during the year, with the Taiwan fleet dominating the activity. The revenue from the transshipment and licenses again makes up the MIMRA's contribution to the general budget of the Government. The catch and effort for all gears combined in the RMI EEZ dropped in 2002, compared to 2001. In the coming year, 2002/2003, the sector is anticipating a further decrease in fishing effort, and transshipment activity, with the shift in fishery away from within and the vicinity of the RMI EEZ, obvious already in the decreasing catch of fish.



- **Fishing Agreements:**

Table 1 shows the various entities, which has access rights, through fishing agreements in the RMI EEZ. It includes most, if not all the entities which has rights last year, including the new entrants, two of which is considered Locally Based foreign operations and the others conducting purse seine fishery. The administration of the access agreements takes into account the measures, and policy, at the regional level (Forum Fisheries Agency, FFA and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, SPC region), which includes the Palau arrangements, minimum terms and

conditions of access, FFA regional and the Vessel Monitoring System, VMS registry, as well as the standardized forms for fishery data. It should be noted that these regional efforts, also takes into account various international practices and norms for fishery operation, particularly the application of the Food And Agriculture Organization (FAO), Code of Conduct, etc. Two of the “Country/Party” category in table 1 is administered by the FFA, of which the RMI is a member. The U.S Treaty allows for U.S Purse seiners operation in the RMI zone and the FFA member countries EEZ, while the FSM Arrangement, allows for domestic flagged purse seiners to fish in the arrangements parties EEZ. FSM Arrangement parties include the RMI, FSM, Nauru, the Solomon Islands, PNG, Palau, and the Kiribati. Under the arrangement, the RMI has five purse flagged vessels active.

**Table 1. Access Agreements in the RMI Exclusive Economic Zone for 2000/2001.**

<b>Country/Party</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Administrator</b>	<b>Type</b>
USA	<b>Multilateral</b>	<b>FFA</b>	<b>Regional Arrangement</b>
Japan	<b>Bilateral</b>	<b>MIMRA</b>	<b>Government to Government</b>
Taiwan	<b>Bilateral</b>	<b>MIMRA</b>	<b>Industry to Government</b>
Korea	<b>Bilateral</b>	<b>MIMRA</b>	<b>Industry to Government</b>
FSM Arrangement	<b>Multilateral</b>	<b>FFA</b>	<b>Sub-Regional</b>
Fong Seong Co.	<b>Bilateral</b>	<b>MIMRA</b>	<b>Industry to Government</b>
*Shandong Fishery Co.	<b>Bilateral</b>	<b>MIMRA</b>	<b>Industry to Government</b>
*Shangai Fishery Co.	<b>Bilateral</b>	<b>MIMRA</b>	<b>Industry to Government</b>
*MIFV	<b>Bilateral</b>	<b>MIMRA</b>	<b>Industry to Government</b>
New Zealand	<b>Bilateral</b>	<b>MIMRA</b>	<b>Industry to Government</b>
*EdgeWater Fishery Co.	<b>Bilateral</b>	<b>MIMRA</b>	<b>Industry to Government</b>

\*New entrants

The FFA in the Solomon Islands administers both the U.S treaty and the FSM Arrangement, and advice member countries of progress and operations, including disbursement of funds through the arrangements. The new entrants actually began operation in the RMI in November 2001, and have thus increased its productivity. Marshall Islands Fishing Venture, MIFV, which took over the fishbase, operates with locally based foreign fishing vessels,

chilled longline vessels, from Mainland China and Taiwan. Licenses validity for these boats ranges from 3 months, 6 months and 1-year period, depending on the vessel operator. The other longline company, Edge-Water Fishery, started around the same time as the MIFV, however was given experimental fishing licenses for shark fishery in the RMI Zone.

**Table 2: Company and Gear type of operations – Number of Vessels**

Country/Party	Gear/method	Number of Boats	Flag
USA	Purse Seine	26	USA
Japan	Purse Seine	34	Japan
	Longline	45	Japan
	Pole and line	74	Japan
Taiwan	Purse Seine	42	Taiwan
Korea	Purse Seine	27	Korea
!FSM Arrangement	Purse Seine	23	FSM,RMI,KI, SI, PNG
Fong Seong Co.	Purse Seine	2	Vanuatu
Shandong Fishery Co.	Purse Seine	2	PROC
Shangai Fishery Co.	Purse Seine	2	PROC
MIFV	Longline	30	PROC, Taiwan
New Zealand	Purse Seine	4	NZ
EdgeWater Fishery Co.	Longline	5	PROC
*Clear Water Fishery	Longline	5	FSM


!Includes the RMI flagged vessels, KOO 101, 102, 103, 105, 107, 108

\*Operates under the MIFV

Source: MIMRA

The number of fishing vessels operated in the RMI for the period totaled 321 vessels, excluding carriers and fishing support crafts. Purse Seine fleet comprised the majority of the licenses issued, with 165 vessels, 85 licenses issued for the longline fleet, and 74 licenses issued for the pole and line fleet. Again, the only fleet operating in the zone for pole and line is Japan. It should be noted that one vessel can be issued up to 6 licenses a year, depending on the operation, i.e., Japanese longline vessels operate on a license per trip basis, with a three month license period. In late 2002, Koos 108 was

launched in Kaoshiung, Taiwan, bringing the number of boats under the RMI flag operating in the FSM Arrangement to 6 purse seiners.

The U.S fleet continues to decline in number and operation in the EEZ. This is probably as a result of poor market price for skipjack tuna during the last period. The low value of skipjack, and high costs of operation, attributed to the reduction in effort in the fleet operation in the RMI EEZ. It should be noted also, that during the period, a large number of the fleet were operating in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO). 



**Catch Statistics:**

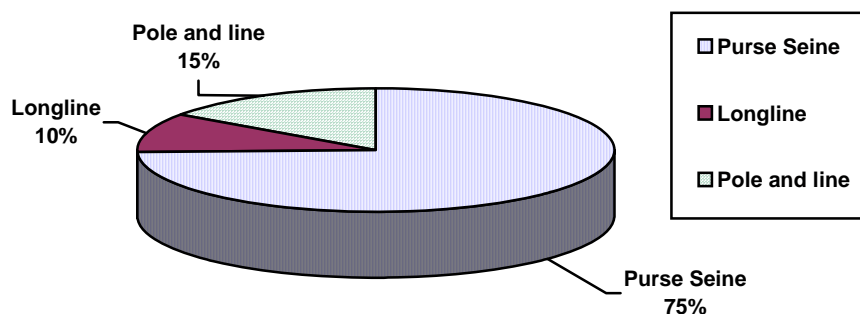
**Table 3: Catch and Efforts in the RMI –2002 (MT)**

Country/Party	Purse Seine	Pole & line	Longline	Carriers /bunkers	FEE (U.S\$ 000)
USA	<b>60</b>				<b>8</b>
*Japan	<b>9,000</b>	<b>7,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>		<b>200</b>
Taiwan	<b>6,000</b>				<b>-0-</b>
Korea	<b>9,000</b>				<b>60</b>
FSM Arrangement	<b>2,680</b>				
Fong Seong Co.	<b>Nil</b>				
Others	<b>2,260</b>		<b>*2,000</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>**29,000 tons</b>	<b>7,000</b>	<b>4,000</b>		<b>***793</b>

Source: MIMRA/SPC

Table 3 is an indicator of catch by fleet and value. \*\*Factors to consider are market price fluctuations and exchange rates the payment periods. \*Estimate of catch by the Locally Based Foreign Fleet.

**Figure 1: Catch by Gears in RMI EEZ - 2002**



Pie Graph – indication of catch in zone by gears. Purse seine caught 29,000 tons of mixed fish, Longline caught 4,000 tons of mixed fish, and Pole and line caught 7,000 tons of mixed fish.

The total fishery yield for the year amounts to just over 40,000 tons of fish (all gears and all fish). About 29,000 tons were caught by the Purse Seine fishery, 7,000 tons were caught by the pole and line fishery and 4,000 tons caught by the Longline fishery. With respect to the longline fishery, it is estimated that the Japanese offshore fleets caught 2,000 tons of mixed tuna, and the other 2,000 tons caught by the locally based foreign fleet based in Majuro. Despite the reduction in fleet size in Japan, the Catch for the

period remains relative due to the introduction of the locally based foreign fleet; The Purse seine catch fluctuates dramatically of the periods since 1998. A second record catch was reported in the EEZ during the late 2001 and early 2002. The pole and line fishery experienced a lower catch during the period, probably due to the declining of the Japanese fleets size, as well increase effort in other parts of the ocean (EPO, etc). Again, Only Japan conducts Pole and line fishery in the RMI EEZ.

**Figure 2: Catch in-zone by species - 2002**

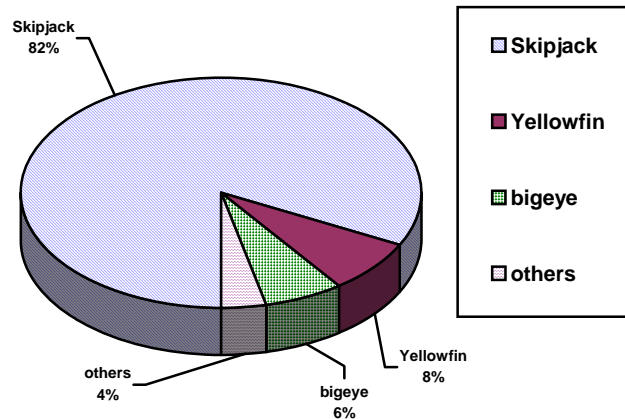
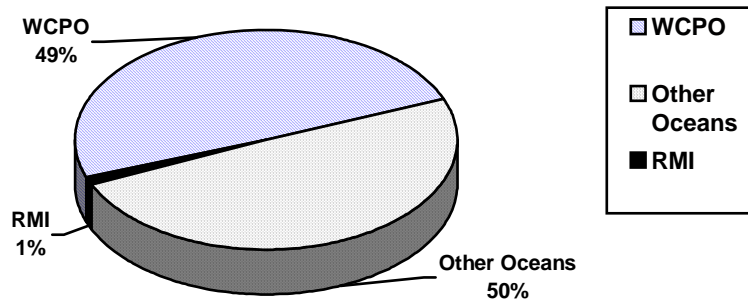


Figure 2; catch by species in RMI zone. The total catch is estimated to about 40,000 tons for 2002, in which about 33,000 tons were skipjack, caught by Pole and line and Purse Seine, about 3,000 tons were yellowfin, 2,500 tons for bigeye, and 1,500 for others.

The global catch for tuna and tuna like species approximate to 4 million tons (FAO Statistics), with about half that figure is estimated as catch in the Western Central Pacific Ocean (SPC) (figure 9). Figure 3 depicts the RMIS share of the pie from the WCPO area to the estimated global catch. Other Oceans includes Eastern Pacific Ocean, Indian Ocean,

Atlantic Ocean, Antarctic, Arctic, etc. Most of these oceans have regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs), similar to what is currently in development in the WCPO under the WCPF Convention. Areas under the WCPF Convention includes the high seas and the territorial zones, for which catch is estimated (Figure 11):

**Figure 3: Global Catch.**



The RMI catch in zone, (all gears, all flags) accounts for 1% of the global catch of tuna and tuna like species. It should be noted that catch for WCPO and Other Oceans, includes estimates of catch in-zone and high seas.

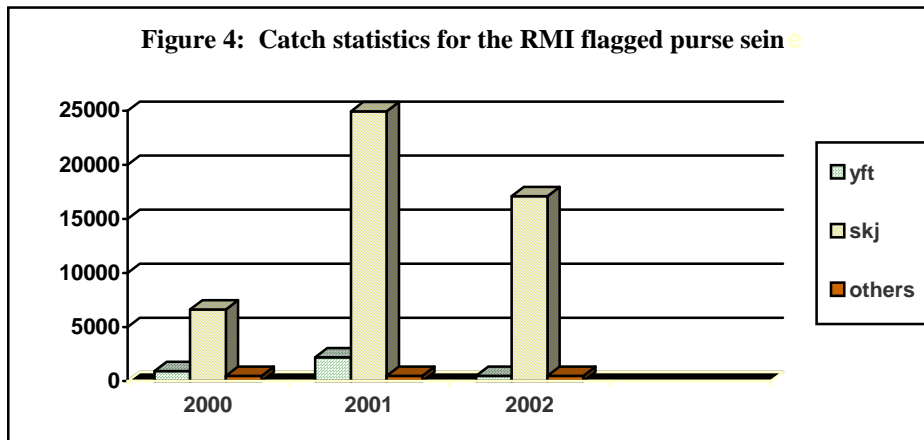
- **RMI Flag Vessels**

The RMI flagged vessels did relatively well in terms of catch since

inception in early 2000. As reported last year, these vessels are originally from Taiwan and are owned by Mr. Koo of Koos Fishing Company. Mr.

Koo himself has a substantial investment in the RMI through the local bank, as well as its local company, running the boats in the WCPO. A total of 7,560 tons of mixed species were caught in 2000, of which 6,625 tons were Skipjack tuna, 935 tons were Yellowfin tuna, and 500 tons of other species. Catch for 2001 totaled 27,218 of mixed species, of which 24,953 tons were

skipjack, 2,215 tons were yellowfin, and 500 tons of other species. While in 2002, a total catch of 17,640 tons of mixed species were recorded, in which 17,100 tons were skipjack, and about 500 tons were yellowfin tuna. These vessels (6 purse seiners) operate under the FSM Arrangement, limiting its fishing efforts to the WCPO area only.



- **Transshipment:**

The transshipment activity continues to rise during the year. A total of 425 vessels showed up in Majuro for transshipment, with the Taiwan purse seine fleet dominating the sector. While it is evident that the proximity of the fishing ground to Majuro, makes it economical for the vessels to call Majuro, other factors such as provisioning, crew rest and exchange, and to some extent, leisure activity entice Majuro port to these vessels. The recent homeland security measures put in place by the United States would also play a role, in so far as vessels deciding to go to port, especially in Guam and Hawaii port. Though this does not have a direct relation to the Transshipment

activity, the activities and businesses that would compliment the transshipping vessels in Guam and Hawaii, have had serious impacts on their operation. Table 4 presents the numbers and fleet transshipped in Majuro for the year 2002.

In 2001, MIMRA commissioned a study on the impacts of the transshipment activity in the Majuro lagoon. The goal was to look into the social, economic, environment impacts of the activity. The result of the study is available in a separate report, however, the study suggests that a vessel would averaged \$5–10,000 (U.S.D), per visit in port for various reasons, including provisioning, crew advances, etc.

**Figure 5: Transshipment in Majuro port since 1998**

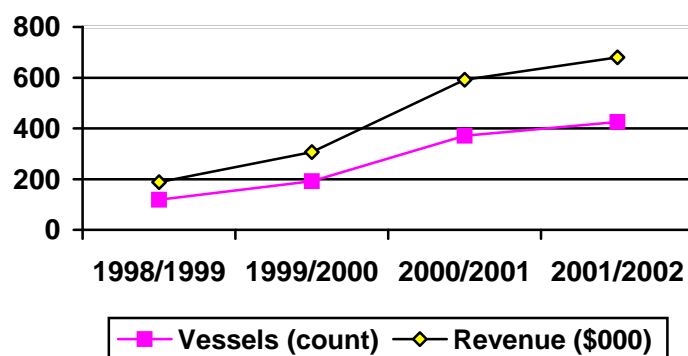


Figure 5 shows the total number of vessels by all gears that call in Majuro port for purposes of Transshipment. 1998 at 118, with revenue of about \$70,000 as fee. In 1999 at 192 vessels, with a revenue of \$115,000, and 2000/2001 at 374 vessels, with an earning of \$221,000, and 2001/2002 425 vessels at \$255,000 as transshipment fee.

**Table 4: Transshipment in Majuro port – 2002**

Country/Party	Purse Seine	Pole & line	Longline	Carriers/bunkers	Total
USA	1				1
Japan					
Taiwan	160			12	172
Korea	40			3	43
FSM Arrangement	100				100
Fong Seong Co.	19				19
Others	40			47	87
<b>Total Vessels</b>	<b>363</b>			<b>62</b>	<b>425</b>
<b>FEE (U.S\$ 000)</b>	<b>171</b>			<b>45</b>	<b>255</b>

Source – MIMRA – While Japan represents the largest fleet licensed in the RMI, none of its vessels transhipped in Majuro for various reasons, including that of their policy, which requires their vessels to offload catches in Japanese ports.

• **License Revenue:**

The license fee for the foreign fishing vessels represents a significant revenue source for the RMI National Government. Since the implementation of the MIMRA Act (revised) in 1997-8, complimented by the reforms, the RMI became a more conducive environment for attracting foreign investment, hence the more Foreign fishing fleet accessed through fishing agreements. It should be noted that prior to 1998, there were

only Japanese and the U.S fleet operating in the RMI waters, averaging just 1 million in revenue. Table 5 presents the revenue for the MIMRA through the Oceanic Division, which includes the license fee, transshipment fee, catch value, and other fees collected under bilateral, multilateral fishing arrangements.

**Table 5. License Revenue in RMI for 2000/2001**

SOURCE	LICENSE	TRANSHIPMENT	ADMIN FEE	ACCESS FEE	TOTAL
LOCAL	166,306.19	268,200.00	36,700.00		471,206.19
JAPAN – KINKATSUKYO	900,399.76		89,700.00		990,099.76
JAPAN – JAPAN TUNA	695,554.52		16,500.00		712,054.52
JAPAN-KAIMAKI	17,676.14			200,700.79	218,376.93
TAIWAN	207,629.16		55,694.00		263,323.16
KOREA	623,870.89		16,500.00	63,229.72	703,600.61
US TREATY				385,857.61	385,857.61
FSM ARRANGMENT	10,000.00		300.00	114,692.51	124,992.51
OTHERS	41,523.00		5,395.00		46,918.00
SUB-TOTAL	2,662,959.66	268,200.00	220,789.00	764,480.63	<b>3,916,429.29</b>

Taiwan has 41 vessels Purse Seine each paying 9,300 = 8,000 for license fee, 300 registration fee, 1,000 observer fee.

Transshipment recorded 363 vessels and 62 carriers transshipped totaling 255,000

Kaimaki has 32 purse seine paying 800,000 yen per boat. Roughly 256,000 USD expected.

Local is considered for the foreign longliners that are otherwise known as Locally Based foreign Boats

US Treaty and FSM Arrangements payments included the catch and 85% treaty payment of distribution by the admin.

• **Comparative Analysis:**

In previous reports it was customary to go back three years for comparison purposes. In this report, we endeavor to go back to 1998, for some data, since 1998 was a milestone in the development of MIMRA and the fishery sector. In figure 6, a record number of vessels were licensed in the RMI in 1998. A number of reasons contributed to this rise, including the policy change, MIMRA Revised ACT, Institutional reform, and most importantly the prevailing El Nino during that period. In short, everything seemed to just fall in place to a good start. Taiwan and Korean purse seiners, and various individual companies began to seek license and access agreements at the same time. At the end of the year (1988), a total of 385 vessels were recorded, as apposed to 112 vessels in 1997. The interests expressed were not limited to only access agreements. Areas such as

transshipment, foreign investments, particularly in service of fishing boats, were also explored. At the same time, MIMRA was also working on the bidding process for the Majuro longline Fishbase. Eventually in 1999-2002, Lunethai fishing Co., won the bid, and formed the Marshall Islands Fishing Venture (MIFV).

**Figure 6: Licensed Vessels since 1998**

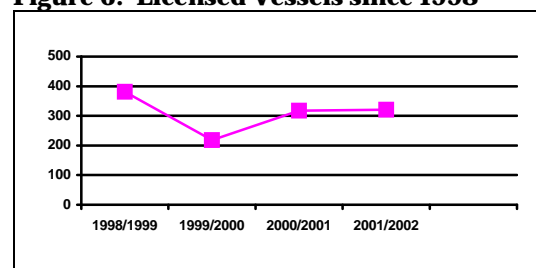


Figure 6 represents the fluctuations of the total number of licensed vessels in the RMI EEZ since 1998 at 385 vessels, 1999 at 219 vessels while in 2000/2001 at 316, and 321 for 2001/2002.

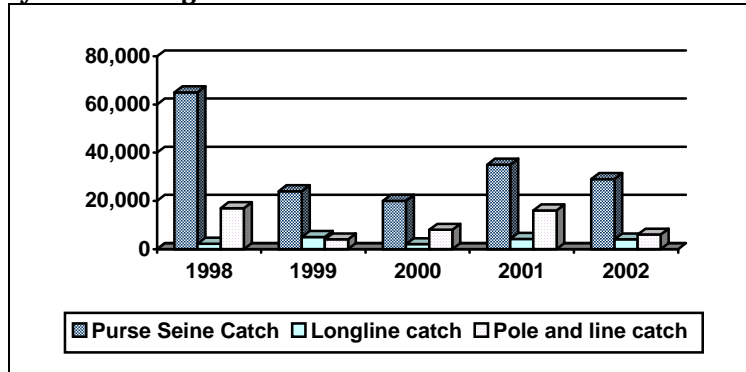
Figure 7 shows catch in the RMI zone by all gears and vessels licensed



through MIMRA. 1998 at about 84,000 metric tons, 1999 at 32,000 metric tons, and 2000, 36,000 metric tons, 2001 at 54,000, while in 2002, at 40,000 tons. In 1998 65,00 tons were taken by purse

seine, 2,200 were taken by Longline, and 17,000 tons were taken by Pole and line. In 1999, 24,000 tons were taken by Purse Seine, while 5,000 tons were taken by Longline and 4,000 tons by pole and line.

**Figure 7: Catch by three main gears since 1998.**

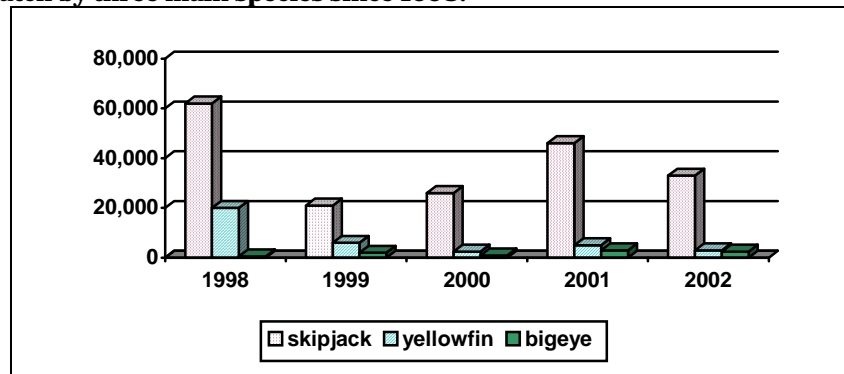


In 2000, 20,000 tons were taken by purse seine, 2,100 by Longline and 8,000 tons by pole and line. In 2001, about 35,000 tons were taken by Purse Seines, 4,000 by Longline, and 16,000 tons taken by the Pole and Line fishery. In 2002, 29,000 tons were taken by Purse Seine, 4,000 by the longlines and 7,000 tons by the pole and line. It should be noted that a record catch in-zone was made in 1998, while the second record catch was recorded in 2001.

being the highest proportion of the capture fishery. In 1998, 500 tons were bigeye, 20,000 tons were yellowfin, and 62,000 tons were skipjack. In 1999, 2,000 tons were bigeye, 6,000 tons were yellowfin, and 21,000 tons were skipjack. In 2000, 900 tons were bigeye, 2,5000 tons were yellowfin, and 26,000 tons were skipjack. In 2001, 3,000 tons were taken as bigeye, 5,000 tons were yellowfin, and 46,000 tons were skipjack. And finally, in 2002 year, 2,500 tons were taken, as bigeye, 3,000 tons as yellowfin and about 33,000 tons were skipjack.

Figure 8 shows the catch by three main species since 1998, skipjack

**Figure 8: Catch by three main species since 1998.**

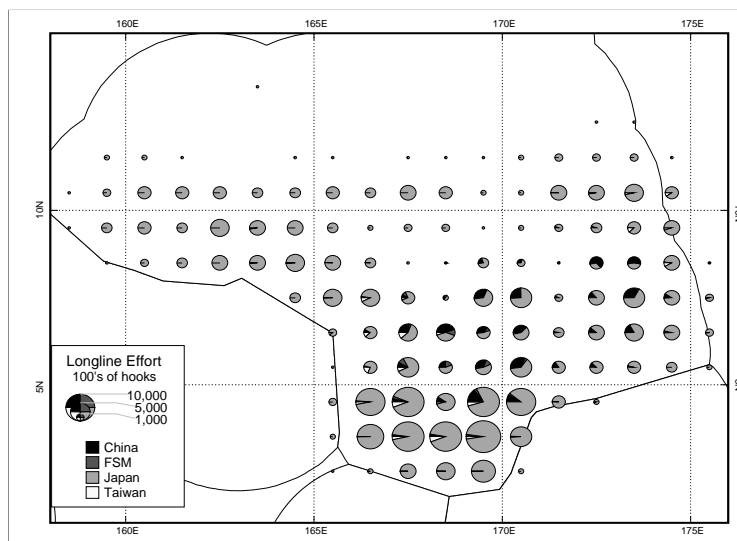


• **Fishing Efforts:**

The fishing effort in the RMI Zone is depicted in figures 9,10, and 11, with the different gears and methods. Figure 1, shows the Longline fishing effort for the year 2002, indicating a large portion of the operation conducted in the south of the EEZ, near the borders of the FSM and the Kiribati. The Purse Seine Fishery operates largely in the south as well,

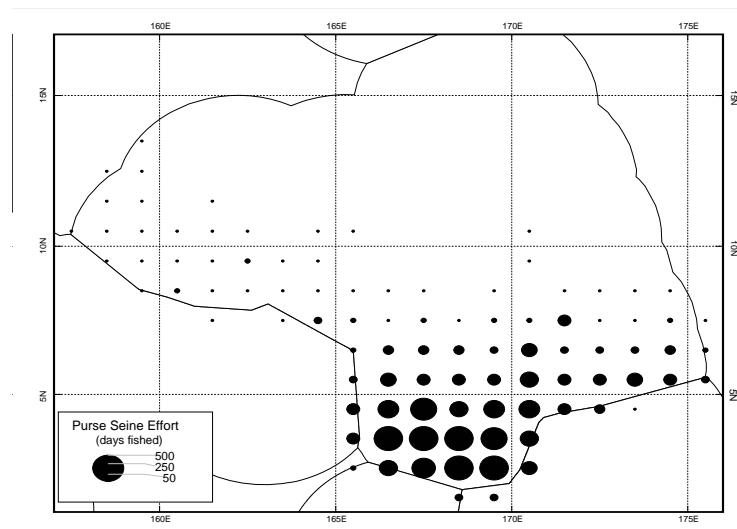
figure 10. The pole and line fishery, on the other hand, operates mostly in the northwest, area of the EEZ. Evidence from the nature of the fishery would suggest that the Japanese fleet operates in the area because of its proximity to Japan, the difference in thermocline, as well as distancing itself from the rest of the fleet.

**Figure 9. Longline Effort in the RMI – 2002**



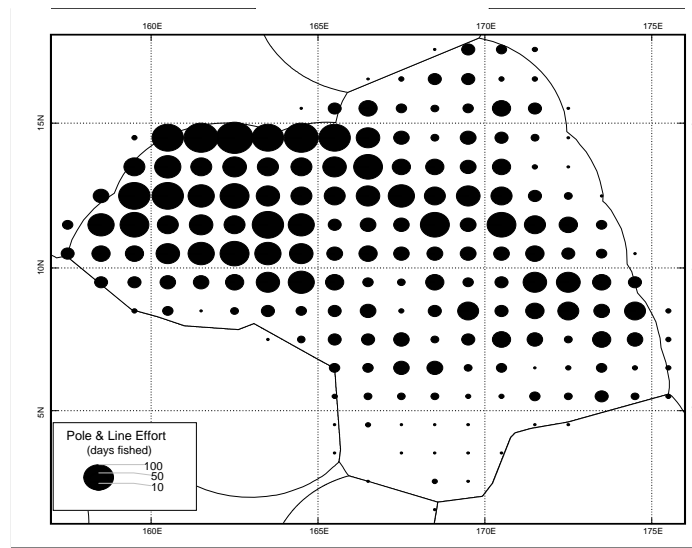
Source: SPC

**Figure 10. Purse Seine Effort in the RMI – 2002**



Source: SPC

**Figure 11. Pole and Line Effort in the RMI – 2002**



Source: SPC

It is interesting to compare the pole and line effort figure with the Purse seine effort. Both efforts primarily target skipjack, with the pole and line effort fairly spread out in the EEZ, active at about 70-80% of the EEZ, with more days recorded on the northwest of the EEZ. The purse seine effort, however, is fairly concentrated on the south, fishing relatively 30% of the EEZ during the period 2002. 🐟

- **Observer Program:**

This year marks a turning point for the RMI program. The SPC and the MIMRA has forged a funding arrangement for the post of National Fisheries Observer Coordinator. The post has been filled, with the candidate due to take up the position late this year.

The post will cover data coordination, including observer placement on the various fishing fleet operating in and out of the RMI.

SPC will be the focal point for all data collected through the program. Data from the observer and port sampling will be streamlined under the National Observer Program for accountability and quality assurance purposes. It has been realized as well the national role each party under the WCPO Convention should play, in terms of responsibilities. It is envisaged that the effort will also address the specific duties and responsibilities under the convention with regards to Observer programs in general, and the provisioning and handling of data.



- **Tuna Management Plan:**

The RMI is developing its Tuna Management Plan this year with the assistance from the Forum Fisheries Agency. The plan will address issues of national and regional concern. Some of the issues will include Flag state responsibilities, WCPF Convention requirements, effects of

the fishery, i.e. tourism, chartered fishing, and the local Billfish club. The plan will address economic, social and environment, by-catch issues, with various consultations with stakeholders planned during the development process.

At this stage, a draft basic outline has been prepared and will soon be looking for contributors to the various issues to be addressed. It is our hope to engage the SPC OFP with the assessment of the national fishery, addressing issues such as national biomass, and catch analysis. While the FFA will be the focal point of the project, MIMRA also aims to capture assistances from other regional and international agencies. such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the US - NMFS, with assistance on specific issues.



- **WCPO Convention:**

After four years of complex negotiations between the coastal States of the Western and Central Pacific and States fishing in that region, the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean was opened for signature at Honolulu on 5 September 2000. The Convention is one of the first regional fisheries agreements to be adopted since the conclusion in 1995 of the UN Fish Stocks Agreement.

The objective of the Convention is to ensure, through effective

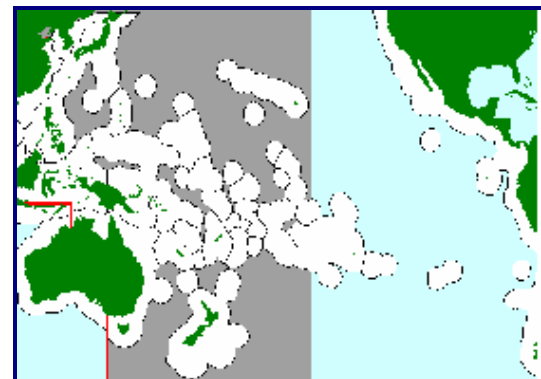
management, the long-term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks in the western and central Pacific Ocean in accordance with the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement. For this purpose, the Convention establishes a Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean. The Contracting Parties to the Convention are, *ipso facto*, members of the Commission. *\*\* (Extracts from the WCPO website)*

The RMI signed the convention in 2000, and later ratified it in 2001. While the Convention is currently in its Preparatory stages, the headquarter site has been selected to be in Pohnpei, the Federated States of Micronesia.

WCPO Convention area is shown in gray area on the map (figure 12).



Figure 12: WCPO



- **Seafood Export Regulations:**

MIMRA is working with the Food and Agriculture Organization to

develop the seafood export requirements of the RMI. The project began in 2002 with training of potential inspectors in Fiji, covering the basics of international standards on seafood safety and export, followed by a site visit in Bangkok for practical inspection of Thailand's efforts.

The Authority has developed a draft management plan and regulation for the RMI requirement, and will set up a working group, through customs department, Attorney Generals office, Quarantine, and Health/Environmental Protection Agency. It is hoped that this working group will further bring in the local requirements, emphasizing on practical aspects, as well as looking at the present and future potential impacts, while further developing the RMI standard. At the same time, work together to bring the regulations to adoption by the appropriate Authorities.

MIMRA realized the potential for seafood export from the RMI, but lacked the standards, and tools for conforming to international and market seafood export requirements.

The Authority envisages stimulating the private sector growth in the RMI, in setting its standards to conform to the international markets. Such markets includes the European Union, United States, with exporting products such as Tuna, reef fish, and processed seafood.

Potential Export from RMI || From Tuna to Reef fish to Processed food.

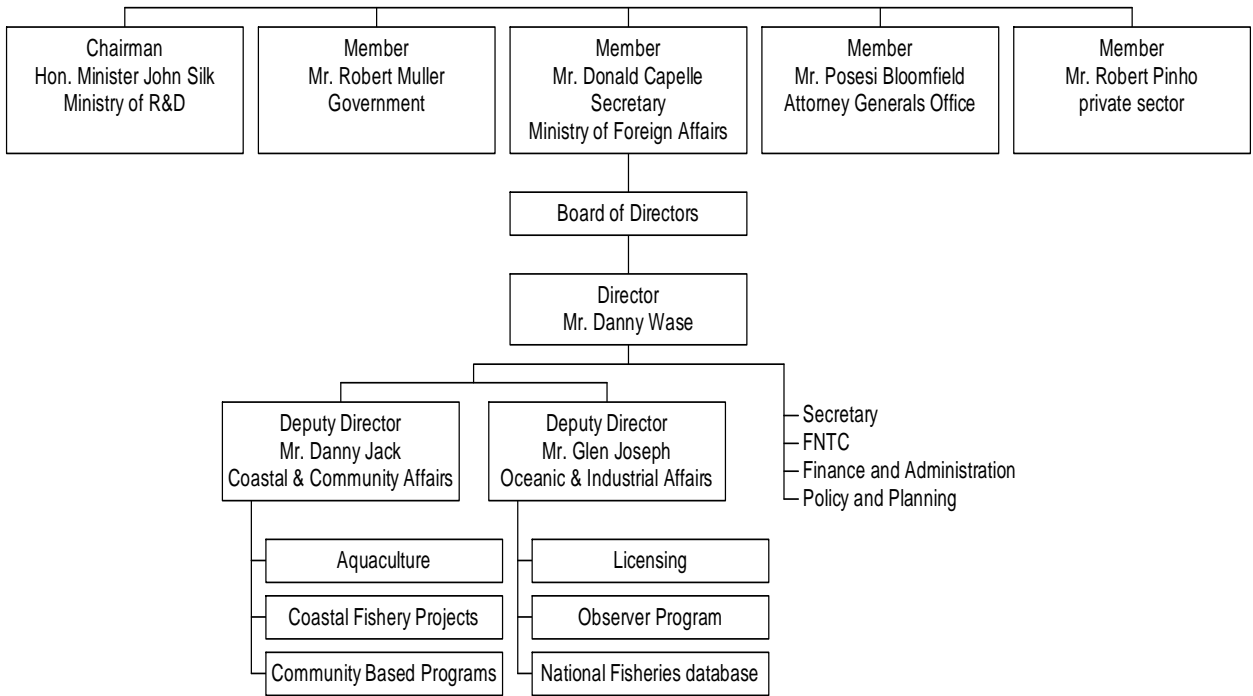




• **Calendar of Events:**  
2003

February	Sub-regional Surveillance planning meeting	Pohnpei, FSM
<i>February – March</i>	<i>Special Fiftieth session of Forum Fisheries Committee</i> <i>Informal meeting on Participation (PrepCon)</i> <i>PREPCON 4</i>	<i>Nadi, Fiji</i>
February	Signing of the subsidiary agreement for fisheries surveillance cooperation. RMI, Palau, FSM	Majuro, MH
<i>March</i>	<i>Internal Meeting of the Pacific Island Parties to the US Treaty</i> <i>15<sup>th</sup> Annual US Treaty Consultation</i> <i>Internal Preparation of the Pacific Island Parties to the US Treaty Negotiations</i> <i>Third US Treaty Extension Negotiations</i>	<i>Majuro, RMI</i>
April	12th Regional Aerial Surveillance Meeting 6th Regional Meeting of the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) Working Group	<b><i>Koror, Palau</i></b>
<i>April – May</i>	<i>22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement</i> <i>8<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Parties to the Palau Agreement</i> <i>8<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Parties to the Federated States of Micronesia Arrangement for Regional Fisheries Agreement</i> <i>Species Working Group Meeting</i> <i>Annual Fifty Second session of the Forum Fisheries Committee</i> <i>5<sup>th</sup> PrepCon on WCPF Convention</i>	<i>Nadi, Fiji</i>
June	Tuna Management Plan Workshop	Majuro, RMI
July	Standing Committee on Tuna & Billfish Scientific Coordinating Group	Moolooloba, Australia
<i>August</i>	<i>Annual Consultation Access Agreement</i> <i>1. Taiwan Deep Sea</i> <i>2. Korea Deep Sea</i>	<i>Agana, Guam</i>
September	Special Forum Fisheries Committee meeting	Cook Islands
September	6 <sup>th</sup> Preparatory Conference on WCPF Convention	Cook Islands
<i>November</i>	<i>RMI National Fisheries Observer Workshop</i>	<i>Majuro, RMI</i>
December	Annual Consultation with Japan	TBA

MIMRA Organization:



**The organizational chart above attempts to show the MIMRA organization. It does not include specific projects and staff in its entirety. It should be used only as a guideline.**



*-End-*