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REPORTING OF DATA IN TABULAR FORM.

by the Executive Secretary.

At the 1956 Annual Meeting the following recommendation by the Committee on Research and statistics was passed.

"To standardise methods of presentation and to facilitate processing, the Committee requested that the Secretariat prepare a bulletin describing the methods of tabulation most suitable for various kinds of data to be submitted to the Commission."

The data to be reported according to the various recommendations passed at the Annual Meetings can be summarised in the following categories:

- I. Data on landings from the fisheries.
2. Data on fishing efforts.
3. Information on fishing vessels.
4. Information on gear (mesh-sizes and dimensions)
5. Data on quantities of fish discarded at sea.
6. Sample data of commercially caught fish.
7. Biological data of fish analyzed (length, age, sex, maturity, food etc.)
8. Conversion factor data from dressed to round fresh weight.
9. Conversion factor data from length of dressed to length of round, fresh fish.
10. Data on relation length-weight of fish.
11. Data on conversion from one kind of length measurement to another.
12. Hydrographic data.
13. Plankton data.

Prescribed forms or directives for the reporting of the following of the above mentioned categories of data have been circulated by the Secretariat:

1 and 2. Landings and Fishing Efforts.

Prescribed forms giving the pattern for the tabulation of the statistical data have been circulated attached to the annual requirements (cfr. Ser. Nos. 76, 122, 231, and 419.)

The ways in which the statistical data are reported only rarely follow the prescribed forms, these being used by the reporters more as an indication of what data should be reported than as a pattern for the actual tabulation of the material. This is obviously caused partly by the fact that the extent and variety of data differ very much from one country to another, and partly from the fact that the institutions reporting have to report about the same data to other institutions and therefore find it more convenient to use the already established form also for the I.C.N.A.F. reporting, whenever it is possible.

In order to furnish space for all the diversified data to be reported by the separate countries prescribed sheets for tabulation would have to be large and cumbersome for mailing, working and filing.

It is the impression of the Secretariat that the present individual way of reporting the statistical data is satisfactory and need not be changed.

ad 3. Information on Fishing Vessels.

With letter of 14th. Nov, 1956 prescribed forms to be completed with the actual figures were calculated within the commission. These forms were used by most of the countries and returned in completed forms.

ad 4. Information on Gear (mesh-sizes and dimensions)

A prescribed form for presenting data of this kind was circulated by the Secretariat on 1st. Feb. 1956, and also with Ser. No. 423 (5th. Oct. 1956). These forms were much used for reporting. Forms for completion of the same pattern, perhaps with some modifications could be used in the future.

ad 5. Data in quantities Discarded.

Discards are included in the prescribed forms for the reporting of I.C.N.A.F. fisheries statistics circulated with Ser. No. 334. It could be considered also to report on discard in connection with the reporting of sample data (when sampling is done at sea), and including length measurements of fish discarded.

ad 6. Samples of Commercially caught Fish.

A request of the reporting of sample data to the commission was passed at the 1956 Annual Meeting. Directions and prescribed forms were circulated from the Secretariat as Ser. No. 422, 1st. Oct. 1956. In some cases the prescribed forms have been used for reporting in other cases, perhaps the majority, countries have preferred to report in tabular forms of their preparation.

As long as the kind and extent of the material to be reported is not yet known it is hardly possible to prepare final forms for completion by the separate countries, nor to decide if such forms should be used or if countries should be left to choose their own tabular forms, perhaps already in use for reporting of sample data to other institutions or for filing.

ad 7. Reporting on Biological Data.

This reporting is considered in the prescribed form circulated for the sampling (cfr. Ser. No. 422). In a very few cases the forms have been used, but in the majority of cases countries preferred to report on forms of their own preparation. It will hardly be convenient to have prescribed forms to meet all the diversified data of this kind that may be reported. It may well be advisable here just to circulate directives stating what kind of data should be reported and more general patterns of the tabular forms that could be used. Upon the request of Panel I such directives and patterns were distributed by the Secretariat within the panel members on 22nd. Jan. 1954 (Ser. No. 121). As Subarea I is the region from which most reporting by tabular form has been done, one might presume that directives of this kind are sufficient for the purpose.

ad 8 and 9. Data for Conversion of Weight and Length from Dressed Fish to Round Fresh Fish.

No special directives or prescribed forms have been circulated. As far as weight conversion is concerned the experiments carried out by the member countries up to 1955 were pretty conclusive; as there is no reason to expect greater activity as to this matter in the near future it is not considered necessary to elaborate directives or presented forms for reporting. As far as length conversion is concerned just the opposite is the case. For the program of sampling of commercial fish, it is of vital interest to have means for converting lengths of dressed fish to lengths of round fresh fish. Data for this conversion has been reported to the Commission. In a compilation of these reports prepared in the Secretariat (Ser. No. 371, 1956 Annual Meeting) descriptions of the methods are given.

ad IO. Relation Length - Weight.

The reporting of data were considered in the circular concerning sampling (Ser. No. 422, P.3 and Form 2). Earlier some individual length weight data have been reported (mainly connected with weight-conversion factor experiments). These, and those reported following Ser. NO. 422 have been complied in Ser. No. 459.

ad II. Conversion from one Length Measurement to Another.

No Special forms have been circulated but directives were given in the request for sample data (Ser. No. 422).

ad I2. Hydrographic Data.

Directives for the reporting of hydrographic data were circulated from the Secretariat 6th. August, 1954 and 14th. January, 1955 (Ser. Nos. 330 and 255).

ad I3. Plankton Data.

No request for reporting of data from Plankton collections have yet been made

CONCLUSIONS.

- A ad I-2. There is at the present no need for a change in the more or less individual ways by which countries are finding it most convenient and suitable to report their statistics on landings and effort.
- B ad 3-4. The presented forms now in use for reporting of data on fishing vessels and gear can be maintained in their present form.
- C ad 5-6. The question of presented forms for the reporting of sample data should be considered by the Commission on Research and Statistics, based on experiences from this year's reporting. The inclusion of discards in this reporting should be considered.
- D ad 7. In Subarea I the only subarea from which all countries collecting biological data are reporting such to the Commission, the reporting is regulated by the circular of 22nd. Jan. 1954 (Ser. No. 161); further needed regulations can be arranged by the panel. In the other subarea, from where only data are submitted by a part of the countries collecting such data, there is no basis for common directives or prescribed forms.
- E ad 8-9. No directives or prescribed forms needed.
- F ad IO. Prescribed form given in Ser. No. 422 (Sample). To be reconsidered in connection with reporting of of Samples. (item C).
- G ad II. Reconsideration in connection with "reporting of samples" (item C)
- H ad I2. No further directives needed.
- I ad I3. Directives to be given, if the Commission decides on regulating collection of this data.

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