

Part I

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

1 July 1971 to 30 June 1973

REPORT OF THE CALCOFI COMMITTEE

Over the 25 years of its existence, the CalCOFI program has undergone considerable evolution. This evolution has emerged from the advancing perception of the nature of broad populations of pelagic creatures and the nature of large-scale events in the ocean and atmosphere that strongly influence the relative abundance and distribution of these oceanic inhabitants. Thus CalCOFI investigations not only initiated inquiries into vital current aspects of ocean climatology, but into recent past changes of climate and populations, into the creatures of the deep sea floor, into food webs and trophic interrelationships, into better measures of plankton biomass, and into a host of other aspects of the oceanic environment. The great majority of these inquiries has demonstrated fundamental value not only in understanding the living resources of the California Current, but in many other scientific areas such as climatology and studies of pollution, and in broader geographical areas. Indeed, CalCOFI has set the philosophy, approaches, and methodology for similar inquiries around the world. It has set a firm base for the re-establishment of a major pelagic fishery in the California Current.

Clearly further enlargement and evolution of the program are necessary, and these are being considered at this time.

One important development in the program during the last two years has been the inclusion of the Instituto Nacional de Pesca (INP) of Mexico in the cooperative planning of CalCOFI cruises in the ocean off Baja California and the Gulf of California. In the fall of 1971 the beginning steps were taken between the Subdirector of INP, the Co-Director of the Mexico/FAO Project of Fisheries Research and Development, and members of the CalCOFI committee. At that meeting it was agreed:

1. To schedule research cruises in Baja California waters in time and area coverage in such a way as to complement each other's efforts.

2. To use comparable methods and equipment in making observations and collections at sea.
3. To share all data and collections obtained during these joint operations.

Profitable discussions have continued between the groups since that time. CalCOFI agencies have supplied INP with help in developing the techniques to use CalCOFI-type equipment, by putting personnel on their ships and receiving INP personnel aboard CalCOFI ships.

The Southwest Fisheries Center invited two biologists from INP for training in identifying fish eggs and larvae of species of interest to CalCOFI in samples collected by all cooperating ships and shared between appropriate agencies.

There has been increased participation of the Escuela Superior de Ciencias Marinas of the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California in Ensenada in cooperative research with the CalCOFI agencies in the California Current and the Gulf of California. Also many of these students are gaining experience by participation in our cruises.

The need for this cooperation was succinctly expressed by Philip M. Roedel in 1968 and at the 1972 CalCOFI Conference, as follows:

"Because the eastern Pacific fishery resources and interests, particularly those of Southern California and the west coast of the Baja California peninsula, are in such large degree the same, there is the very evident need for cooperation between the United States and Mexico in fishery matters if their common resources are to be properly husbanded."

Several of the papers in this volume of the CalCOFI Reports are based wholly or partly on data cooperatively obtained in 1972 by INP and CalCOFI.

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