

MONTHLY REPORT (August 2011)– TECHNICAL

FISH FENCE

On Thursday 21st July 2011 a meeting was held between Fisheries and the fish fence licence holders based on a request by fish fence licence holders to revisit and review the current licensing fee for fish fence. The current annual fish fence licensing fee is \$200 plus 15% CT and it has been regulated in Schedule 2 of the Fisheries Management (Conservation) Regulations 2008. Fish fence licence holders strongly reiterated the fact that the current price for the required amount of wires for a fish fence with three traps at our local stores in Tonga is approximately between \$3000 to \$4000 pa'anga but the lifespan of wires for fish fence is at most 14 months. Added to, the duty imposed on imported wires (for fish fence) is also high and as such the fish fence licence holder is finding it really difficult to invest and survive on fish fence business. Fish fence licence holders requested for the annual fish fence licensing fee to be amended from T\$200 pa'anga to T\$100 pa'anga and for all imported fish fence materials be exempted from custom duty. As a result the Cabinet approved the proposals made by the fish fence licence holders and the Fisheries Division will apply the new fee once the amendment is gazetted.

FISHING NET

A petition was submitted to Parliament in September 2008 by the net fishing (Kupenga) fishermen from Vava'u and Tongatapu echoing their disagreement with the licensing fee for fish net as stipulated in Schedule 2 of the Fisheries Management (Conservation) Regulations 2008. As a result it was directed by Parliament in 2008 for the Ministry responsible for Fisheries to further discuss the issues raised by the Kupenga fishermen and if possible to review the fish net licensing fees. The Fisheries held few consultative

meetings with Kupenga fishermen on the 2nd and 16th of June 2011 and as a result the Cabinet approved and directed that the annual fish net licensing fee of T\$500 pa'anga be abolished and the new proposed licensing fee be introduced. The new annual fish net licensing fees are as follows:

- (i) Up to 1000 metres length of fish net - T\$100 pa'anga
- (ii) Between 1001 metres and 2000 metres length of fish net - T\$200 pa'anga
- (iii) Between 2001 and 3000 metres length of fish net - T\$300 pa'anga
- (iv) Over 3000 metres of fish net - T\$500 pa'anga