

## Small-Scale Fisheries Development in the Virgin Islands 1970-1977

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### ABSTRACT

Few comprehensive reviews are available on the fishing industry and resources of the Virgin Islands, and these reviews primarily include the Virgin Islands within larger studies of the Caribbean region. Reviews concerned solely with the Virgin Islands are comparatively recent and their results are summarized.

Small scale fisheries research and development by the Virgin Islands government has concentrated on two general areas: (1) Small boat design improvements, modernization of local techniques, and gear development; (2) Biological data collection and analysis, and resource surveys of the Virgin Islands fisheries.

Small boat gear development and research was designed to investigate, apply, demonstrate, and report on the use of modernized and miniaturized fishing gear and techniques compatible with traditionally small (5-8.5 m) boats of the Virgin Islands. Additional feasibility research was conducted on different boat and engine designs and configurations.

During the period 1970-1977, there was a significant increase in fisheries biology work in the Virgin Islands. The results of exploratory fishing for a source of non-ciguatera food and sport fish showed that fish taken from 100 fm or more were largely free of ciguatera. Patterns of ciguatera poisoning and local consumer responses to ciguatera were investigated.

Research and development results of deepwater exploratory fishing in the Virgin Islands are presented. Analytical emphasis was given to species available, and yields in numbers in relation to areal distributions, sea conditions, temporal and bathymetric conditions, and gear efficiency.

The results of a selective life history study of the two most abundant deepwater snappers (silk and blackfin) in the Virgin Islands are presented.

A summary of on-going fisheries research and development is presented and future directions of small scale fisheries research in the Virgin Islands are outlined.

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