

George Kent, *The Politics of Pacific Island Fisheries*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1980. Pp. ix, 191, bibliography, index. \$22.00.

Given the paucity of contemporary studies on marine affairs in the Pacific in general and the islands in particular, this book is a most welcome addition to the literature. Covering such a vast portion of the globe, the author makes ample use of international reports, yearbooks, technical papers, and statistics (24 tables). Yet, many chapters in the book are generally articulated around issues between developed and developing nations of the Pacific rim and not Oceania as is claimed in the Introduction. Nonetheless, the study provides the reader with a broad picture of the current conditions of fisheries in the Pacific Ocean and details a wide range of problems as well as possible solutions.

The text is divided into three parts each containing several chapters on a related theme. Part I, entitled "The Situation" describes general production patterns, it profiles the fishing industry for some twenty-eight islands and island groups, and it surveys international organizations concerned with fisheries in the region. The country profiles not only point out a continuous shortage of information on which to build management schemes, but also, their dependency on outside nations resulting in high levels of subordination and lack of initiative: On the whole, the first four chapters introduce the reader to a more detailed treatment of the subject in part II and III.

The second part of the book covers a series of familiar problems in fisheries common to most developing economies. The problems described range from the need to improve production, limit environmental impacts, recognize the nutritional value, obtain more reliable information, create a better trade balance and to resolve a variety of management conflict in the islands. While these issues need to be understood within the context of a new management scheme, what role do they play in the politics of fisheries in the Pacific? The point to be made is that the objectives of this work are not clearly stated and the title does not fully illuminate the economic, environmental and social questions raised in the book.

From a geo-political perspective, part III is certainly the most interesting and revealing section in the book. In lieu of current, less effective management options and regional organizations, the author looks at several alternative arrangements such as the Common Heritage idea, the conference of the Law of the Sea and the new Forum Fisheries Agency. As important as these organizations might be to the future of fisheries in the islands only marginal coverage is devoted to them.

Throughout the book, however, Kent is perhaps at his best in tracing some of the unique features in Pacific island fisheries. For instance, the multinational arrangements and corporate linkages among fishing nations make it virtually impossible to interpret trade and production data accurately. He asks "if Koreans fish Samoan Waters and sell their catches to American fishing boats, whose fish are they?" (p. 10). "The Soviets supply fishery products to Singapore only to be processed and exported to Japan" (p. 92). In such cases, the true quantities of fish caught, traded and consumed in the islands tend to be systematically underestimated. Another issue of considerable international interest in the Pacific is the management of highly migratory species. On this point, the United States and the South Pacific nations have long been at odds particularly over the inclusion of migratory species within the two-hundred-mile zones of national jurisdiction. Then, there is the problem of comparative disadvantage in

the endowment of natural resources. Due to the variation in environmental factors and the behavior of fish, the northern Pacific is generally richer in fish stock than the water in the South Pacific. These kinds of conditions raise the question of what should be regarded as significantly in need of deliberate international management.

In examining fisheries management in the Pacific, the author concludes that outside agencies may be consulted, but solutions to the problem of development should ultimately come from the island nations themselves. Only remedies which are essentially their own can be the best solutions to local problems. What is regarded as a rather modest step toward a workable arrangement for the islands is the creation of the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency. The full text of the convention creating the agency is included in this volume as an appendix. The major function of the agency is to (a) collect, analyze and disseminate information on fish resources, legislation, pricing, marketing, shipping, and management procedures, (b) provide technical assistance on fisheries development policy, negotiation, licensing, surveillance and enforcement and, (c) establish working arrangements with other regional organizations in the South Pacific. Despite good intentions, the organization turned out to be a rather weak service agency because it was not being delegated any power by the participating members nations. Meanwhile, many island nations are playing out some of the familiar dynamics of world politics with all kinds of bilateral negotiations with outside powers underway. The author, however, is still hopeful that some bases for cooperation of at least a few resources be regarded as the common heritage of all people in the region.

The Politics of Pacific Island Fisheries is a well-documented and informative study, a progress report of practical value, suggestive rather than definitive, speculative rather than explanatory. On the other hand, anyone hoping to find a model or concept-oriented analysis in Political or Regional Science will be disappointed. It is equally unfortunate that the author chose not to address the subject of small-scale artisanal fisheries even though the point is made that on a per capita basis subsistence production in the Pacific islands is still relatively high. Despite these weaknesses, Kent's book is of particular interest to those concerned with international and regional fisheries management. Perhaps the most salient success of this work is the author's new interpretation of the island systems in the Pacific which are not important for their total production but for the access they have to some of the world's major fish stocks.

Gerald H: Krausse
University of Rhode Island