

AGENDA ITEM: 4 INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Purpose: To provide more focus on necessary infrastructure such as a jetty and more reliable air services to support economic development of the marine sector in Kiritimati Island.

Background:

The marine and fish resources are abundant in Kiritimati island which may have significant potential if the right enabling environment for development is created. For the offshore fisheries there are challenges and opportunities that need to be address in order to realize its full potential. The challenges includes, limited and expensive infrastructures, poor communication, high cost of services, etc., which impinges on the economic benefits that can be derived from the offshore fisheries sector. Despite these challenges Kiritimati Island do have more development opportunities than Tarawa that can be utilized to maximise economic benefits and these includes; its close proximity to potential fisheries markets such as Hawaii and Fiji, its geographical location which make it ideal for a regional longline hub for vessels operating in the eastern and western Pacific Ocean, its world reputation as one of the sport fishing destination for fly fishing, etc.

The development of the infrastructure in Christmas Island has been an ongoing concern for the Government of Kiribati. In 2002 an initial assessment was undertaken by SPC/FFA on the development options and needs for Christmas Island (Chapman, L November 2002). In this report both the need for a jetty and an air service availability were highlighted as major constraint to the development of fisheries especially the offshore fishing industry.

KPA 6: INFRASTRUCTURE – Port Development on Kiritimati Island.

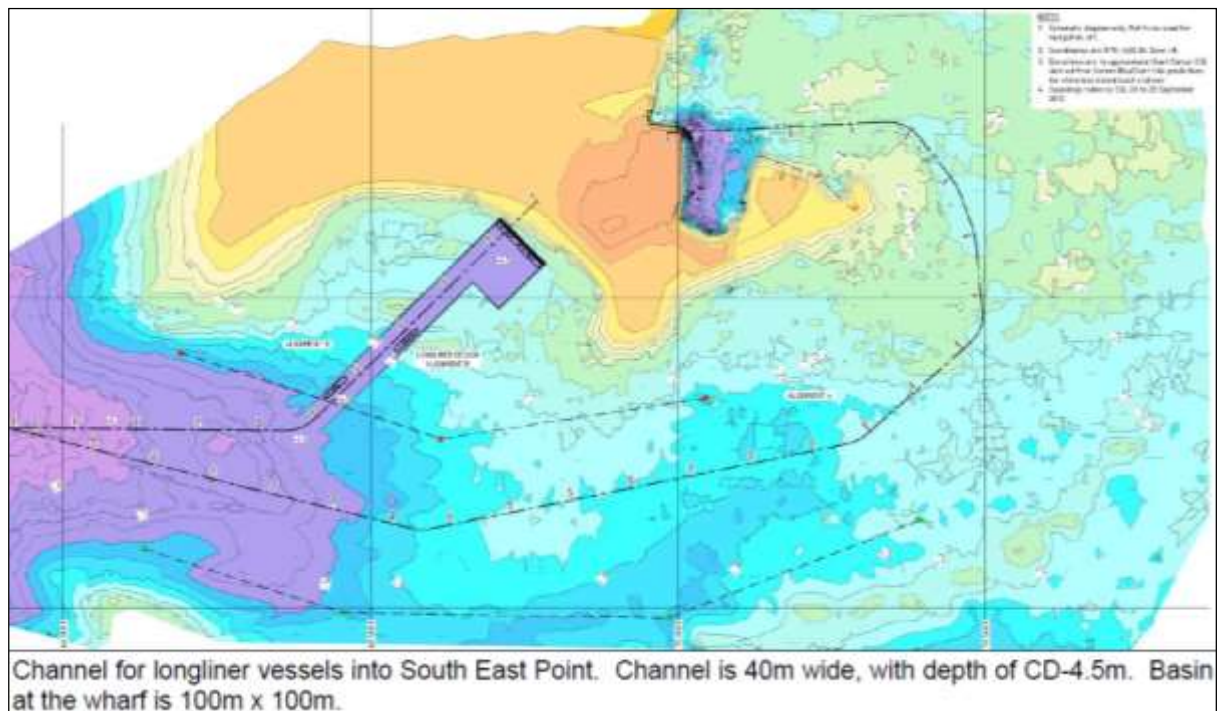
In 2006 the Asian Development undertook a study for the development of Christmas Island to address problems of the existing jetty currently operated by the Kiribati Port Authority (KPA), which associated with the fenders on its side. The study highlights that during rough weather, it is dangerous for the ships to berth, they also not only get damaged by knocking or bouncing to the jetty, but also has caused concrete surface of the jetty to shear off the main steel supporting structure. The height is also a critical problem for ships offloading domestic passengers and cargoes. Therefore, domestic ships cannot dock at the jetty especially during bad weathers, but they have to moor offshore and offload by small lighters. The jetty is so inefficient thus continuously posing significant costs to both the public and private operators. An offshore water breaker has been considered as one of the solutions to shelter the port area from continuous strong waves and rough weathers. But this was not possible as it may involve too much cost for construction.

Following these studies, this is one of the considerable constraints to the fisheries development on the island, therefore in December 2012 MFMRD work closely with to FFA to undertake a preliminary assessment of the jetty and provide potential sites for developing a new fisheries wharf/jetty on Kiritimati Island. Erasito Consultancy Firm was engaged in this work and has provided a report “Kirimati Island Port Scoping Study” offering four options potentially suitable for the fisheries jetty.

After a close consultation with the environment and tourism sector, and other concerned sectors such as MLPID and KPA, MFMRD has recommended for option 3 (see Figure 1) with an initial estimated cost of NZD\$12.5 million. It may be the best option that will cater for long ling fishing boats and domestic cargo boats. The jetty may be easily upgraded in the future

when significant interests of cruise ships resume for visiting Kiritimati again. The Government of Kiribati has approached and indicated interest to the EU to utilize EDF 11 entire resource to cover the cost of this development, including costs of rehabilitation of the processing plant, resource management and capacity building issues through the implementation of the Kiritimati Integrated Fisheries Master Plan 2013-15.

Figure 1: Map of Option 3 – Potential site for the proposed fisheries jetty on Kiritimati Island.



In addition, the current airline schedules are greatly limiting to any development of export markets in the fisheries sector (oceanic, coastal and aquaculture). This may partly be addressed with tuna fishery development were shore based operations would bring in charter aircraft to export their products to Hawaii and possibly other destinations. Such charter operations would allow some export of coastal fisheries and aquaculture products and also provide a service for importing goods needed on the island.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The proposed solutions are;

- Development of a wharf that will allow safe berthing of both long line and domestic cargo vessels for offloading and re-provision
- Upgrading of the fishing processing facilities on Kiritimati island to provide better opportunities for high quality fish products for overseas markets.
- Ensure that all the necessary support facilities', electricity, water, etc are available at the wharf
- Encourage an expansion of current airline services in consultation with the private sector especially tuna fisheries operations.