

INDO-PACIFIC FISHERIES COUNCIL

THE Sixth Session of the Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council (which is an Inter-Governmental organization of sixteen countries of the Indo-Pacific area) was held at Tokyo (Japan) from 30th September to 14th October 1955. The session was attended by delegations from all the member countries of the Council, viz, Australia, Burma, Ceylon, France, India, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, U.K., U.S.A., and Viet Nam. Observers also participated on behalf of the UNESCO, South Pacific Commission, the World Meteorological Organisation, and International Commission for Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean.

During the session, it was decided to observe Indo-Pacific Fisheries Years at regular intervals when attempts will be made for simultaneous collection of statistics relating to fisheries and other ancillary biological factors by the different countries in the Indo-Pacific region. The first Indo-Pacific Fisheries Year is proposed to be observed in 1957-58 to coincide with the International Geophysical Year. Various other proposals to increase the efficiency of the Council work during and between the sessions were discussed and formulated. Co-operative plans for research in India, Burma and

Pakistan on the Hilsa fisheries were adopted at the session, as also steps taken to initiate such co-operative research on the mackerel (*Rastrelliger*) fisheries which is one of the most important marine fisheries of South and South-East Asia. A Symposium on Prawn Fisheries held along with the session and at which many specialists participated highlighted the great value of this sea fishery resource to the Indo-Pacific area. It was decided to hold an International Symposium on Fish Culture in Rice Fields during the seventh session of the Council.

India was represented on the Council by Dr. N. K. Panikkar, who also participated at the conclusion of the session in meetings convened by the UNESCO at Tokyo on Marine Sciences. Dr. Panikkar (India) was unanimously elected as Chairman and Mr. D. J. Rochford (Australia) as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing period. The next session of the Council will be held at Bandung in Indonesia in 1957 at the kind invitation of the Indonesian Government. A special meeting of specialists to draw up a co-operative programme on *Rastrelliger* is proposed to be held in Malaya in 1956.

NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM, U.S.A.*

FORMATION of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, Evanston, Ill., was announced on 6 September by its President, John M. Stalnaker. The Corporation is an independent, non-profit organization whose purpose is to devise and administer a nation-wide system of scholarships for higher education. The Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York have undertaken to finance the activity by providing grants totalling \$.25 million for its administrative expenses. The Ford Foundation has also appropriated a \$10 million scholarship fund, payable at the rate of \$1 million a year for 10 years, and is prepared to finance additional scholarships up to a total of \$8 million. All Secondary Schools, public and private, are entitled to participate in the programme.

The major underlying purposes of these grants are twofold: to find the country's most talented young people and make a college education available to them regardless of their financial situation; and to make it easy for business

enterprises to contribute effectively to the support of higher education. A further purpose is to provide, in one organization, a single programme that will reduce wasteful duplication of operation and expense and will, at the same time, protect fully the natural interests and purposes of the donors. The flexibility of the present programme provides this protection.

Beginning this fall, the more than 24,000 Secondary Schools of the nation will be invited to participate annually in the National Merit Scholarship Programme. The selection will be made in a series of stages and finally, the highest for each state to the extent of five times the number of scholarships to be awarded, will be requested to supply further information with regard to school records, recommendations, and biographical information. Using all of this background material, the selection of the winners will be made.

It may be worthwhile to initiate a similar programme in our country for the recruitment of the best scientific talent.

* *Science*, 1955, 122, 508.