

PART I

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

1 July 1969–30 June 1970

REPORT OF THE CALCOFI COMMITTEE

In volume 11 (1965) of these Reports, the Committee reviewed events set in motion by the California Cooperative Oceanic Fisheries Investigations culminating in the establishment in 1965 of a fishery for anchovies as an experiment in scientific management. It seems appropriate to note briefly the fifth anniversary. Prior to the birth, the conception was first recorded in the Marine Research Committee minutes of October 24, 1961, that the anchovy population was potentially a major resource which might be utilized for the benefit of the people of California. At that time the conclusion rested solely on population estimates derived from egg and larva surveys because no anchovy fishery large enough to permit an estimate of the total resource had ever existed on this coast. By 1964 more mature studies by scientists in the CalCOFI program based on further accumulating evidence led them to recommend that the California Fish and Game Commission establish a quota for an anchovy fishery large enough to test the estimates of the population size but small enough to safeguard the future of the population. The Fish and Game Commission, taking into account other interests, notably the need of a large

population of bait and forage fish to maintain and encourage a healthy sport fishery, in 1965 set a modest quota of 75,000 tons. In the first years both fishermen and processors were cautious about making the investments necessary to take full advantage of this quota. However, experience has encouraged such investments and when the catch approached 75,000 tons, the Commission in accordance with a policy previously established, increased the quota. The catch of more than 90,000 tons in 1970 is still, according to the best scientific estimates, very conservative compared with the potential yield, but it is already a notable addition to the total catch of wetfish. The slow growth tests the patience of scientists, who feel that a meaningful use of this valuable resource is being neglected and that an annual catch of two or three times this size is conservative and also required to check their population estimates. However, the present level of the fishery is beneficial in giving fishermen, processors, and the State ample experience with the complexities of utilizing and managing this major resource in the interests of all users.—*Herbert W. Frey, John D. Isaacs, Alan R. Longhurst, Marston C. Sargent.*