



The undersea craft could carry out several missions dealing with the reactions of fish to fishing gear. The effects of fishing vessel noise on the fish could be determined and the reactions of these fish to fishing nets and other gear could be studied.

The all-weather capability of a submerged craft would permit its use at all latitudes during stormy seasons.

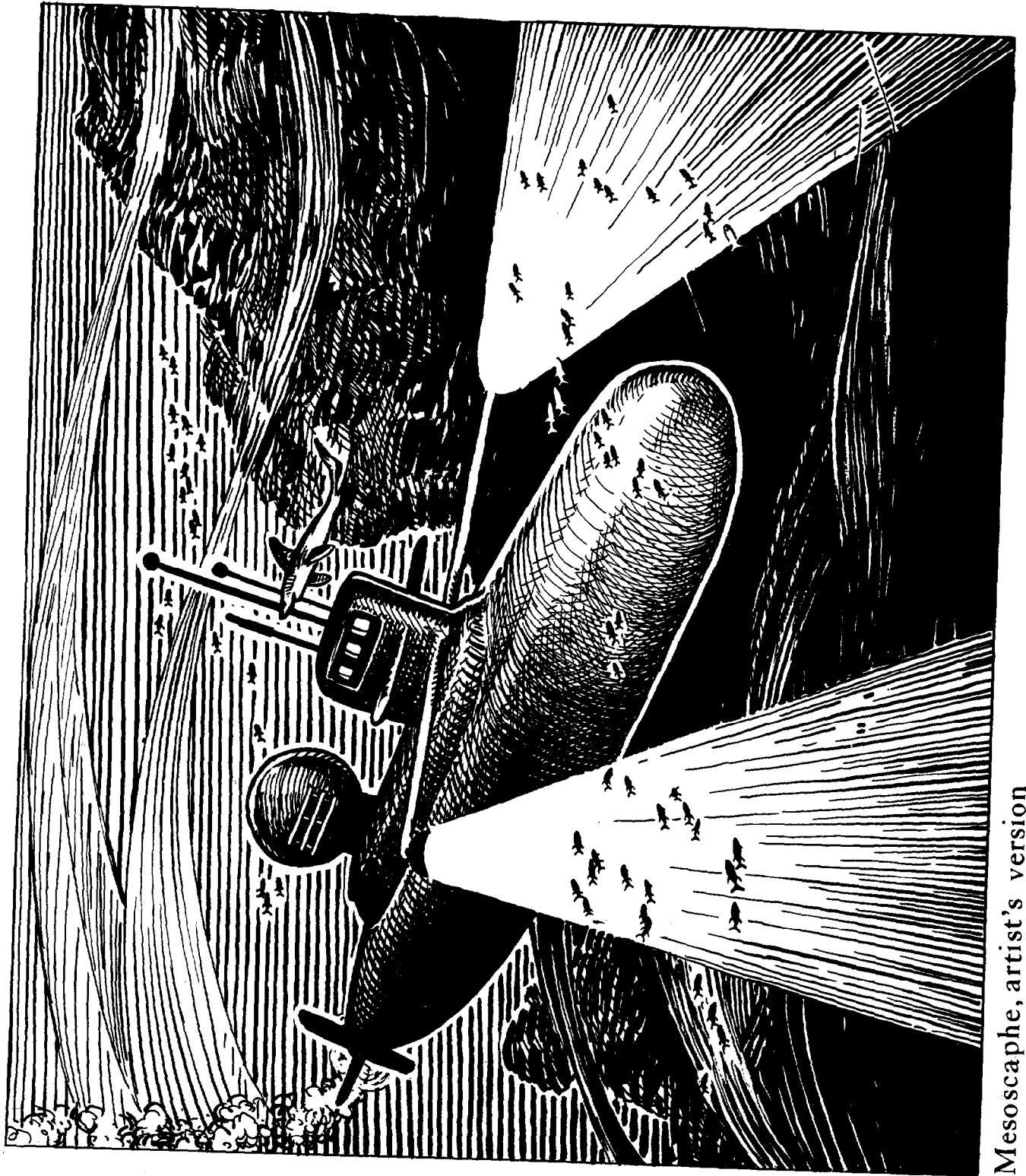
The mesoscaphe, as visualized by Interior scientists, would require a submerged speed of 20 knots in order to track and study large fish, such as sharks and tuna. The vessel would have to be capable of staying submerged as long as six weeks to allow uninterrupted studies of biological and oceanographic changes. The length of the research submarine would have to be less than 200 feet for maneuverability. Nuclear power may be necessary to meet these requirements.

This mesoscaphe is part of the National Oceanographic program being planned and coordinated by the Inter-agency Committee on Oceanography of the Federal Council for Science and Technology.

The Department of the Interior has asked Congress for funds to carry out a feasibility study on the mesoscaphe. Hull and power plant design, construction features, type of undersea collecting gear, and crew training problems would be included in such a study.

"We need better eyes in the sea, eyes comparable in power to those with which scientists are probing outer space," Secretary Udall said. "We need to apply our technological abilities to more intensive probing of inner space, the world ocean."

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Mesoscaphe, artist's version