

THE FIFTH PTTP ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Location: Virtual meeting (Microsoft Teams), led from SPC Headquarters, Noumea, New Caledonia
Date & time: 12th April 2022, 11:00 to 11:30
Theme: 2022 Cruise Planning

Attendees online: David Itano, SungKwon Soh, Elaine Garvilles, Russell Dunham, Ren Fen Wu, Berry Muller, M. Matsubara, Aoki Yoshinori, Bradley Philip, Kathryn Gavira O’Neill, Beth Vanden Heuvel, Il-kang Na,
Attendees in Noumea: Joe Scutt Phillips, Bruno Leroy, Aurelie Guillou, Simon Nicol, Ludwig Kumoru

1. Welcome and preliminaries

The chair, Simon Nicol, opened the meeting, welcomed all participants and introduced Bruno Leroy and Joe Scutt Phillips to go through the agenda.

2. Agenda

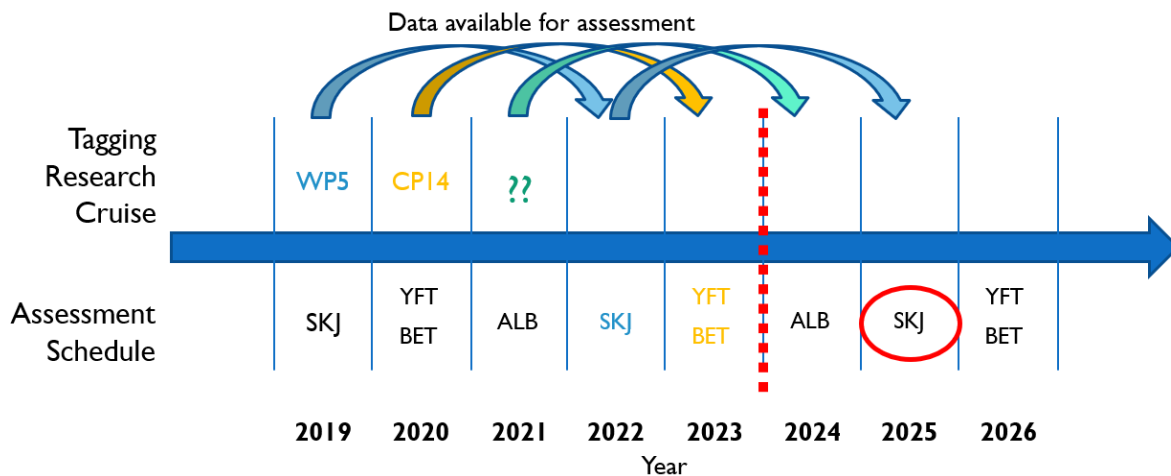
Joe briefly outlined the purpose of, and schedule for the meeting. These were:

- Brief review of upcoming PTTP priorities
- Outline and discuss planned tagging activities for 2022
- Overview of tag recovery activities since 2021 CP15
- Update on Japanese regional tagging activities, and coordination of potential research objectives
- Anticipate administrative and technical requirements

3. Tagging data requirements

Joe provided overview of tagging data requirements. Ideally, there is a 3-year cut-off for tagging data integration into the stock assessments, to allow for the recapture and validation of tag recovery to occur. With SKJ assessment planned for 2025, it is of key importance to continue tagging time series in time for that 2025 assessment.

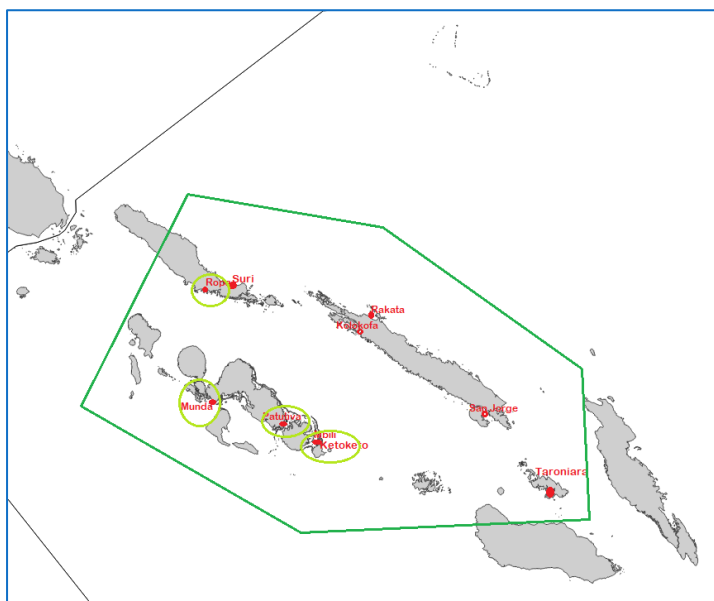
The post COVID-19 situation is still difficult in the Pacific with many country borders staying closed.



4. 2022 cruise implementation

Bruno presented the 2022 tagging cruise plan scheduled to be implemented in the Solomon Islands EEZ in Aug-Sep. At the time of this meeting, tagging cruise implementation seemed only possible in SI waters as other close-by countries are not confirming any opening of their border schedule. Bradley P. mentioned later in the meeting that FSM might open in late August.

Contact has been made with National Fisheries Development (NFD) company and a charter agreement is under writing to use one of their P&L vessels. The area options for the releases are limited due to the difficulties of accessing bait grounds outside the current agreements in place between NFD and local communities.



Current accessible bait grounds are circled with light green color. It is likely that the bulk of releases will happen within the darker-green polygon area.

The cruise objective is to release 10,000 conventional tags in skipjack tuna.

5. Tag recovery

Joe provided an overview of the work and highlighted the last CP15 cruise with a good recapture rate. There was excellent engagement from the US PS fleet and some Korean vessels providing high quality recapture information directly from the vessel. SK asked how the contact with those vessels was done and Simon replied that this has been through tag recovery officers during catch transfer in Kiribati. SK said he will carry-on trying to contact Korean government for collaboration improvement.

FSM asked about the likely recapture of tags in their ports. Joe answered that communication would ramp up regarding tag recovery leading up to the planned WP6 cruise, and that if there was a need for any promotional material to let the PTTP team know.

Presentation on Japanese tagging cruise plans for 2022 and 2021 results

Aoki-san and Matsubara-san provided an overview of the Japanese tagging cruises. Two cruises were implemented in 2021-2022:

- one close to Japan in Oct-Nov that released 1199 SKJ (between 50 and 60 cm FL) tagged with CT and 216 with AT; and
- the other between 0 – 25° N and 135-180° E in Jan-Feb 2022, that released 6,509 CTs and 168 ATs in SKJ between 31 and 65 cm FL.

Similarly, 2 other cruises are planned in Oct 22:

- one in JP waters planning to release 2,500 CTs and 100 ATs; and
- the other in North FSM waters, planning to release 5,000 CTs and 130 ATs.

Collaboration between Japan and SPC should continue with tag exchanges to compare recovery rates.

6. Other business

There was agreement across the advisory committee that aside from the Soltai 105, no other suitable tagging platform was available to carry out the proposed WP6 cruise plan. The chartering of this vessel would also provide consistent operational comparison with previous tagging data in the region.

11:30 – Meeting closed and thanks all.