



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
NINETEENTH REGULAR SESSION**

Koror, Palau
16 - 24 August 2023

**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMISSION
PART 1: INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS**

WCPFC-SC19-AR/CCM-11 (Rev.01)

KIRIBATI

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July 2023

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PART 1: INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH, AND STATISTICS**



**Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Development
KIRIBATI**

Scientific data was provided to the Commission in accordance with the decision relating to the provision of scientific data to the Commission by 30th April 2023	[YES]
If no, please indicate the reason(s) and intended actions.	

Table of Contents

1	Abstract.....	4
2	Tabular Annual Fisheries Information	4
3	Background.....	5
3.1	Pole and Line	5
3.2	Longline	5
3.3	Purse seine.....	5
3.4	Troll and Vertical Hand Line.....	5
4	Flag State Reporting	5
4.1	Kiribati vessels	6
4.1.1	Kiribati Longline.....	6
4.1.2	Kiribati Purse Seine.....	6
4.1.3	Kiribati Pole and Line.....	7
4.2	Annual Flag State Catch in WCPFC Convention Area	8
4.2.1	Longline Fishery.....	8
4.2.2	Pole and Line Fishery.....	9
4.2.3	Purse Seine Fishery	9
4.2.4	Artisanal Fishery	10
4.2.5	Catch and Effort Distribution for Kiribati Vessels.....	11
5	Coastal State Reporting	13
5.1	Licensed Vessel by Gear	13
5.2	Catch by Flag.....	14
6	Socio-economic factors	15
7	Disposal of Catch	15
8	Onshore Development	15
8.1	Processing Plant.....	15
8.2	Longline Vessel Project.....	16
9	Future Prospect of the Fishery	16
10	Status of Tuna Fishery Data Collection Systems	177
10.1	Logsheet Data Collection and Verification.....	177
10.2	Observer Programme	177
10.3	Port Sampling Programme	177
10.4	Unloading / Transshipment.....	177
11	Research Activities Covering Target and Non-target Species	177

Table 1. Kiribati Longline fleet active inside the Convention Area, 2018-22.....	6
Table 2. Kiribati Purse seine fleet active inside Convention Area, 2018-22.....	7
Table 3. Kiribati Pole and Line fleet active inside the Convention Area, 2018-22.....	7
Table 4. Annual catch by Kiribati Longline fleet inside the Convention Area by Species, 2018-22.	8
Table 5. Annual catch by Kiribati Pole and Line inside the Convention Area by Species, 2018-22.	9
Table 6. Annual catch by Kiribati Purse seine inside the Convention Area by Species, 2018-22.....	10
Table 7. Annual catch by Artisanal fishery by species, 2018-22.....	11
Table 8. Annual vessels licensed by Kiribati, 2018-22	13

Figure 1. Depiction of Kiribati Longline Fleet by Size Category, 2018-22.	6
Figure 2. Depiction of Kiribati Purse seine Fleet by Size Category, 2018-22.....	7
Figure 3. Depiction of Kiribati Fleet Active in the WCPO by Gear Type from 2018-22.	8
Figure 4. Depiction of catch by Kiribati longline fleet inside the Convention Area by Species, 2018-22.	9
Figure 5. Depiction of catch by Kiribati Purse seine inside the Convention Area by Species, 2018-22.	10
Figure 6. Depiction of catch by Artisanal fishery by Species, 2018-22.	11
Figure 7. Effort distribution of Kiribati Purse seine inside the Convention Area, 2018-22.	12
Figure 8. Effort Distribution of Kiribati Longline inside the Convention Area, 2018-22.....	12
Figure 9. Depiction of annual licensed vessel by gear type, 2018-22.	14
Figure 10. Depiction of annual catch by major fleet inside Kiribati EEZ, 2018-22.....	14
Figure 11. KFL staff and employment record, 2013-22.	16

1 Abstract

Kiribati tuna fisheries comprise mainly of small-scale artisanal fisheries operating small-sized wooden skiff (<7m) inside 12nm, commercial and domestic purse seines, pole and lines and domestic longline. Domestic purse seiners and longlines represent vessels either chartered or operating under joint venture arrangements. Foreign purse seiners from distant water fishing nations continue to access Kiribati's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) under bilateral, regional, and multilateral access arrangements. Support vessels like tanker and reefer carriers also licensed by Kiribati through bilateral fishing agreements.

Annual catch estimates for Kiribati longline fleets continues to increase from 2018-22 whilst drop is notable by Kiribati purse seine fleets in 2020. Key tuna species harvested include Skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) targeted by purse seiners for overseas cannery processing and small-scale artisanal troll fishing for domestic consumption. Higher grade tunas such as Yellowfin (*Thunnus albacores*) and Bigeye (*Thunnus obesus*) were primary species in the longline fishery destined for local processing for overseas export. There is significant catch of Albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) tuna although this is not the main fishery.

Kiribati's EEZ remain accessed by foreign and commercial fishing operators from Korea, Chinese-Taipei, Japan and the United States including purse seiners licensed under regional arrangements such as the FSMA. Apart from catcher vessels (purse seine, longline and pole and line) other gears such tankers and reefer carriers also allowed to operate in Kiribati's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) to support fishing operation. Current bilateral access governed under fishing agreement between the Government and respective individual fishing companies or associations are normally run for one year.

Purse seine fishery, in particular, is vital to Kiribati economy for it provides the majority of Government budget annually through the Vessel Day Scheme (VDS). Revenues from transshipment activity have also contributed to the national economy. Closure of the longline fishery in 2017 had no major economic implications on the national economy however, revenue from the purse seine fishery continues to support the national budget on annual basis.

Present longline that remain access to Kiribati's EEZ either owned or chartered by joint venture companies; Kiribati Fish Limited Company (KFL) and Kiritimati Island Fish Limited (KIFL). KFL owns a processing in Betio, Tarawa while KIFL has established office in Tarawa and also plans to establish as well operational and processing base in Kiritimati Island which is an ideal location given concentration of the longline fishery in the Line area. On the contrary, the pole and line fishery has not been significant in terms of vessel number and economic contribution however it remains vital to the employment sector, in particular crewing and seafaring.

Kiribati has 60 vessels active in the Convention Area in 2022 consisting of 34 longline and 26 purse seiners. Tuna is central for Kiribati livelihood and economic backbone of the Government therefore sustainable management of the resource is vital for the nation.

2 Tabular Annual Fisheries Information

This report provides annual catch estimates of tuna, non-target species and bycatch caught by Kiribati vessels for the period 2018-2022. Refer to appended Tables and Figures.

3 Background

Kiribati has no major commercial fisheries for highly migratory species in the WCPO apart from domestic small-scale artisanal and troll fishery. Management of key tuna species were regulated under national laws, regulations, and policies including management and conservation measures adopted at the regional and Commission level.

3.1 Pole and Line

The only commercial fishery in the country was the pole and line developed by the Government of Kiribati back in the 1980s. The domestic company Te Mautari Limited (TML) is a wholly government – owned company established to develop a national pole-and-line fishery. The company plagued with technical and economic difficulties resulting from a wide range of geographical, management and development challenges such as isolation, infrastructural limitation and variability in resource abundance. Efforts exerted on revitalizing the company performance however the company eventually wind up its operations in the late 1990s.

3.2 Longline

Kiribati's EEZ is famous for longline fishing targeting premium grade tunas. Longline operators in the past were mainly foreign operators licensed under bilateral access arrangements the majority of which were mostly Asian countries such as Japan, Korea, China and Chinese-Taipei. Longline fishing is concentrated mostly in the Phoenix and Line group in the east compared to the Gilbert area in the west. Closure of the fishery by Kiribati in 2017 ceased operation of longline companies except KFL/KIFL chartered vessels. The closure impacted vessel number however insignificant economic impact on Government revenue.

3.3 Purse seine

Kiribati is yet to have the capacity to own and operate purse seine fishery to harvest and export tuna overseas. The Kiribati Government through the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resource Development (MFMRD) established joint venture companies and charter arrangement with fishing partners aiming to develop the national tuna industry in future. Countries that currently have joint venture and charter arrangement with the Government of Kiribati are Korea and China. Like the rest of PNA membership, Kiribati regulates purse seine fishing in its waters through the Vessel Day Scheme - the scheme that apply across all bilateral fishing agreements.

3.4 Troll and Vertical Hand Line

Artisanal fishery forms part of tuna fishery and comprises mostly of local fishermen catching tuna mainly for locally sale and domestic consumption. Common fishing methods used in this fishery are trolling targeting Skipjack tuna and vertical hand lining for Bigeye and Yellowfin. Boats used in this fishery are typically wooden small skiff (usually <7 meters) powered by a 15-40 HP outboard engines. The estimated number of artisanal boats based on the 2015 artisanal fisheries survey estimates is 1,911. Estimates for this important fishery in recent years are very approximate due to various challenges in acquiring sufficient and representative compiling data.

4 Flag State Reporting

This section reports national fleets in the Convention Area by gear type, trends in terms of fishing patterns, effort, targeted species, and trends in vessel size composition.

4.1 Kiribati vessels

Kiribati operates longline and purse seine fishery through joint venture and charter arrangement. There was one pole and line vessel flag under Kiribati in 2015 established under a bilateral arrangement however the vessel shortly deregistered due to change in licensing arrangement with the owner of vessel.

4.1.1 Kiribati Longline

Longline fleet number observed a significant increase from 9 in 2018 to 47 in 2020 and then a drop by 13 in 2021 and 2022. The drop occurs due to the reduction in number of vessels at 500GRT+ size category to the fleet. The reduction largely attributed to the non-operational of some longlines normally chartered by both the Kiribati Fish Limited (KFL) and Kiritimati Island Fish Limited (KIFL).

Table 1. Kiribati Longline fleet active inside the Convention Area, 2018-22.

Vessel category	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
0 - 50 GRT	1	11%	1	4%	1	2%	0	0%	0	0%
51 -200 GRT	7	78%	10	42%	9	19%	6	18%	6	18%
201 -500 GRT	1	11%	8	33%	20	43%	15	44%	15	44%
500+ GRT	0	0%	5	21%	17	36%	13	38%	13	38%
Total	9		24		47		34		34	
N/A	0		0		0		0		0	

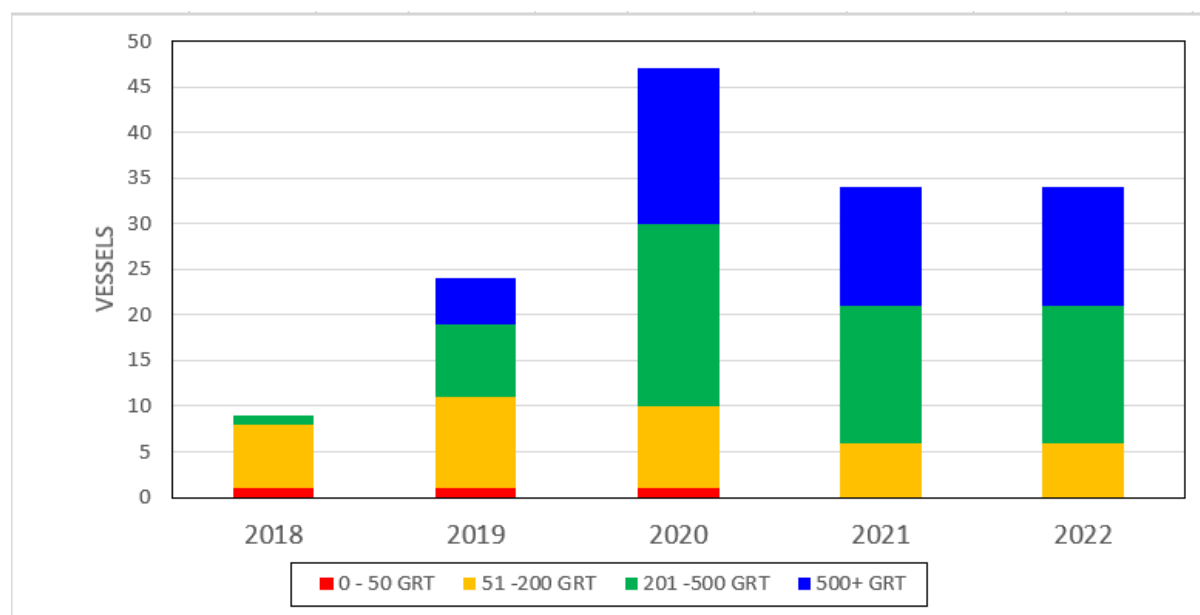


Figure 1. Depiction of Kiribati Longline Fleet by Size Category, 2018-22.

4.1.2 Kiribati Purse Seine

Purse seine fleet number was highest in 2021 (26) and 2022 (26). Gradual increase observed since 2018. The majority of the purse seine fleets in the 1500+ GRT category gradually increased with a steady increased observed for vessels in category 1,000 to 1500 GRT since 2018. The current purse seine fleet consists mainly of vessel with 1,000GRT and above.

Table 2. Kiribati Purse seine fleet active inside Convention Area, 2018-22.

Vessel category	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
0 - 500 GRT	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
501 -1000 GRT	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
1001 -1500 GRT	9	43%	9	41%	11	44%	10	38%	10	38%
1500+ GRT	12	57%	13	59%	14	56%	16	62%	16	62%
Total	21		22		25		26		26	
N/A	0		0		0		0		0	

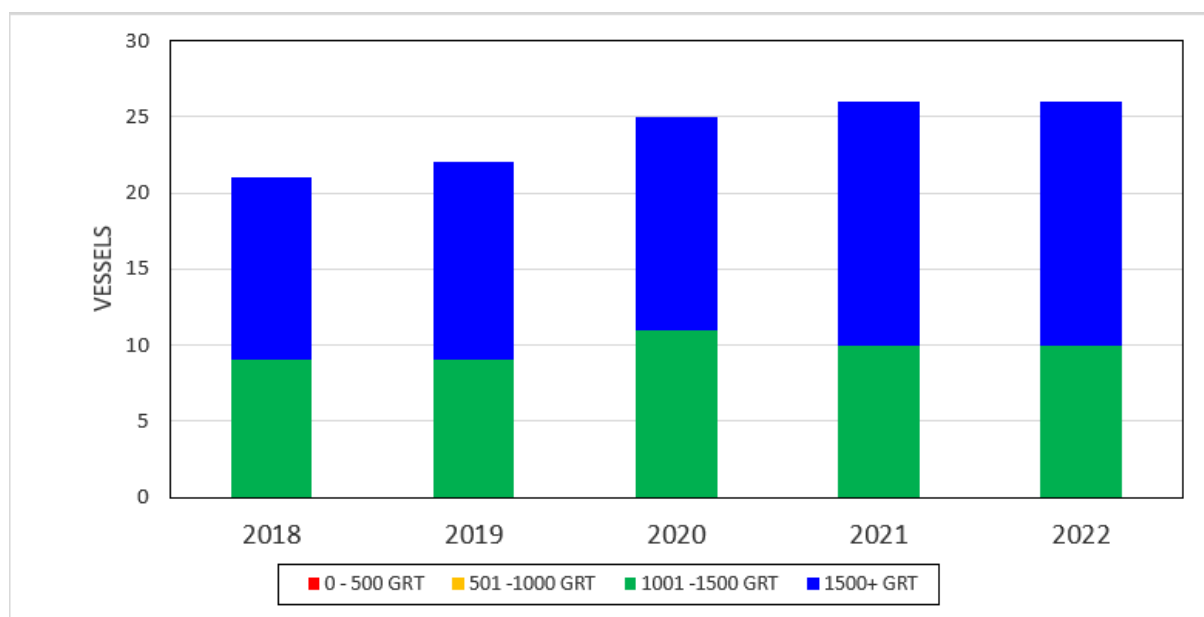


Figure 2. Depiction of Kiribati Purse seine Fleet by Size Category, 2018-22.

4.1.3 Kiribati Pole and Line

Kiribati had no pole and line vessel active in the WCPO after 2018 as depicted in Table 3 and Figure 3.

Table 3. Kiribati Pole and Line fleet active inside the Convention Area, 2018-22.

Vessel category	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
0 - 50 GRT	0		0		0		0		0	
51 -150 GRT	0		0		0		0		0	
150+ GRT	0		0		0		0		0	
Unknown	0		0		0		0		0	
Total	0		0		0		0		0	

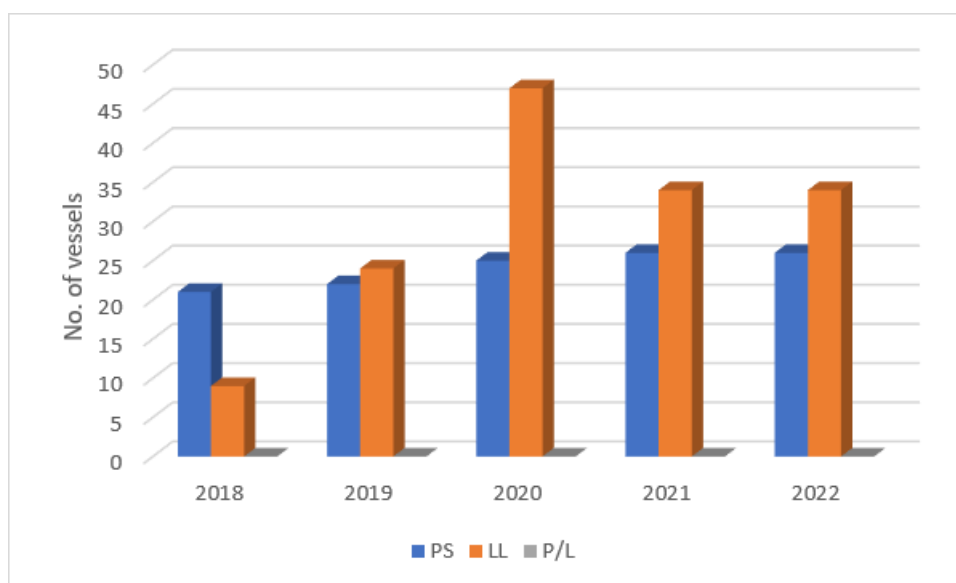


Figure 3. Depiction of Kiribati Fleet Active in the WCPO by Gear Type from 2018-22.

The total number of vessels registered under Kiribati and active in the WCPO in 2022 was 60 representing 22% from the total number for the years 2018 to 2022. The number was similar with that of 2021 but a drop was observed from the 2020 total by 16% – the period which saw a significant drop in number of long line vessels chartered by both KFL and KIFL. Absence of pole and line vessels activity in the WCPO observed for the years 2018 to 2022.

4.2 Annual Flag State Catch in WCPFC Convention Area

This section discusses annual catch estimates for Kiribati vessels by gear and target species.

4.2.1 Longline Fishery

Overall catch in the longline fishery observed a substantial increase from 1,230mt in 2018 (the lowest from 2018-2022) to 5,130mt in 2020. Catch in 2020 also shows a sharp expansion in longline catch since 2018 and higher than the 5-year average (4,233mt). Catch for 2022 has increased by around 2% from that of 2021 catch.

Table 4. Annual catch by Kiribati Longline fleet inside the Convention Area by Species, 2018-22.

WCPFC Key Species	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022		2022 Discard	
	MT	%	MT	%	MT	%	MT	%	MT	%	MT	%
ALBACORE	340	28%	1,131	31%	1,884	37%	985	36%	2,162	26%	148	34%
BIGEYE TUNA	423	34%	1,292	35%	1,570	31%	625	23%	2,707	32%	45	10%
PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
SKIPJACK TUNA	15	1%	144	4%	35	1%	39	1%	110	1%	3	1%
YELLOWFIN TUNA	220	18%	862	23%	1,279	25%	904	33%	2,535	30%	56	13%
BLACK MARLIN	2	0%	77	2%	72	1%	9	0%	33	0%	0	0%
BLUE MARLIN	28	2%	22	1%	89	2%	80	3%	214	3%	15	3%
STRIPED MARLIN	2	0%	18	0%	20	0%	18	1%	27	0%	0	0%
SWORDFISH	21	2%	122	3%	180	4%	50	2%	401	5%	6	1%
BLUE SHARK	34	3%	2	0%	1	0%	38	1%	184	2%	164	38%
SILKY SHARK	141	11%	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%
HAMMERHEAD SHARKS	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
MAKO SHARKS	4	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	0%	0	0%
OCEANIC WHITETIP SHARK	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
PORBEABLE / SALMON SHARK	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
WHALE SHARK	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
THRESHER SHARKS	0	0%	8	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	0%	0	0%
Total	1,230		3,678		5,130		2,749		8,379		437	

Increase in the longline fleet (see Figure 4) have contributed to increase in catch in this fishery for the periods 2018 to 2020 and 2022 respectively. A significant drop in catch was observed in 2021 that could associate with fleets' fishing mobility and preferences (area). Catch composition in 2022 (highest) even less vessels fish compared with 2020 with reason that might relate with covid restrictions. Catch consists mainly of Bigeye (32%), Albacore (26%) and Yellowfin (30%) while the rest split between species of Marlin and Shark. Although Albacore is not the main fishery it is still caught by the fishery.

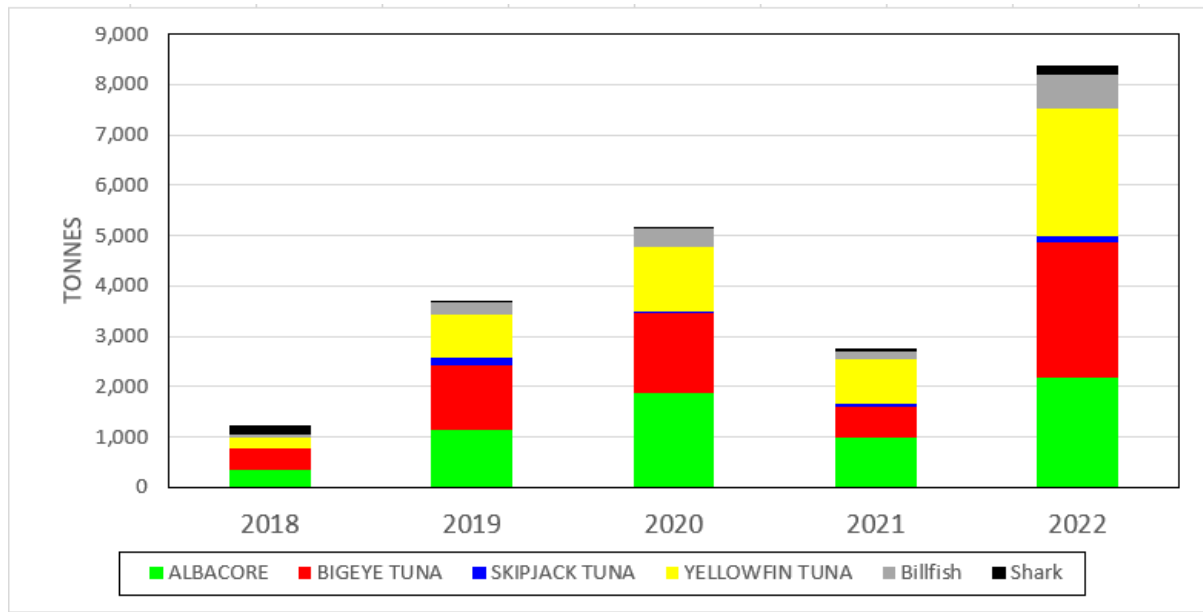


Figure 4. Depiction of catch by Kiribati longline fleet inside the Convention Area by Species, 2018-22.

4.2.2 Pole and Line Fishery

Catch for pole and line fishery is mainly Skipjack and Yellowfin however catch for this fishery is lowest compared to purse seine and longline. No catch after 2015 for there was no pole and line vessel licensed after 2015.

Table 5. Annual catch by Kiribati Pole and Line inside the Convention Area by Species, 2015-22.

Species	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Yellowfin	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bigeye	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Skipjack	240	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	253	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

4.2.3 Purse Seine Fishery

Catch in the purse seine fishery fluctuates around 200,000mt, however unlike the longline catch annual increase for purse seine shows a gentle slope after 2017. Catch between 2018 and 2019 saw an increase by 20% however a significant decrease of 9% was observed for years 2020 and 2021. The majority of catch is mostly Skipjack as it accounts for more than 80% on average since 2018, with low in 2021 of 77% and the highest in 2022 with 93%.

Table 6. Annual catch by Kiribati Purse seine inside the Convention Area by Species, 2018-22.

WCPFC Key Species	RETAINED and DISCARDS										2022 Discards	
	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022		MT	%
	MT	%	MT	%	MT	%	MT	%	MT	%		
ALBACORE	0	0%	5	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
BIGEYE TUNA	11,482	6%	7,054	3%	11,017	5%	8,532	5%	1,531	1%	0	0%
PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
SKIPJACK TUNA	153,252	81%	194,482	85%	161,043	80%	145,429	80%	170,419	93%	9	4%
YELLOWFIN TUNA	24,698	13%	26,241	12%	28,316	14%	27,200	15%	11,756	6%	1	0%
BLACK MARLIN	7	0%	11	0%	15	0%	7	0%	4	0%	4	2%
BLUE MARLIN	27	0%	23	0%	29	0%	12	0%	36	0%	36	17%
STRIPED MARLIN	5	0%	5	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
WORDFISH	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
BLUE SHARK	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
SILKY SHARK	67	0%	57	0%	170	0%	75	0%	144	0%	144	70%
HAMMERHEAD SHARKS	0	0%	1	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
MAKO SHARKS	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
OCEANIC WHITETIP SHARK	1	0%	3	0%	8	0%	2	0%	13	0%	13	6%
PORBEABLE / SALMON SHARK	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
WHALE SHARK	4	0%	1	0%	4	0%	2	0%	0	0%	0	0%
THRESHER SHARKS	0	0%	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	189,543		227,883		200,605		181,259		183,903		207	

Yellowfin and Bigeye are two other important species in the purse seine fishery. There were also record of non-targeted species such as Black Marlin, Blue Marlin, Striped Marlin, Silky shark, Hammerhead, Oceanic Whitetip and Whale shark caught by the fishery. Average catch from 2018-2022 was 197,430.8 mt. Catch discard was observed for non-targeted species with the highest; the silky Shark with 144mt and Blue Marlin with 36mt respectively.

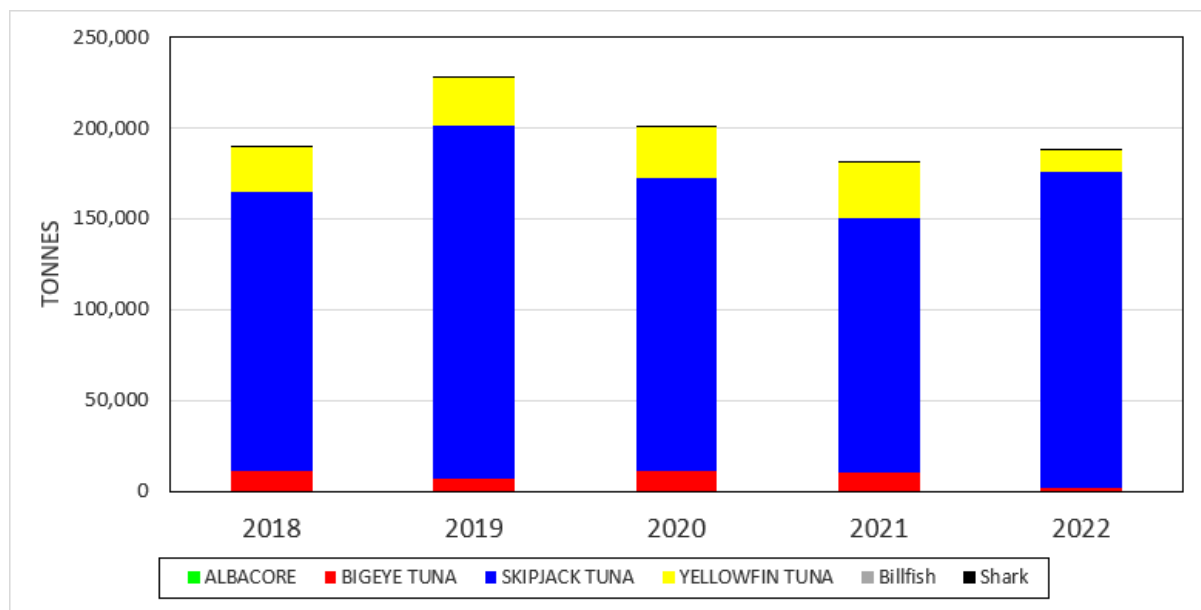


Figure 5. Depiction of catch by Kiribati Purse seine inside the Convention Area by Species, 2018-22.

4.2.4 Artisanal Fishery

Catch from artisanal fishermen supplied the majority of household consumption and most of small-scale domestic markets. Due to incomplete information on artisanal fishermen data for this fishery are estimates and carried over from previous year therefore catch for 2022 was similar to that of last year.

Important species caught in this fishery were mainly Skipjack and Yellowfin. Main gear used in this fishery are small wooden skiff boats powered by outboard motorized engine of less than 100HP. Usage of fiberglass and aluminum boats is notable among local fishermen and this may relate to cost variation between materials used in the construction of these skiffs. However, the use of wooden skiff is preferred by local fishermen.

Table 7. Annual catch by Artisanal fishery by species, 2018-22.

WCPFC Key Species	2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	MT	%	MT	%	MT	%	MT	%	MT	%
ALBACORE	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
BIGEYE TUNA	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
SKIPJACK TUNA	2,190	50%	2,190	50%	2,190	50%	2,190	50%	2,190	50%
YELLOWFIN TUNA	2,169	50%	2,169	50%	2,169	50%	2,169	50%	2,169	50%
BLACK MARLIN	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
BLUE MARLIN	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
STRIPED MARLIN	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
SWORDFISH	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
BLUE SHARK	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
SILKY SHARK	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
HAMMERHEAD SHARKS	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
MAKO SHARKS	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
OCEANIC WHITETIP SHARK	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
PORBEABLE / SALMON SHARK	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
WHALE SHARK	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
THRESHER SHARKS	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	4,359		4,359		4,359		4,359		4,359	

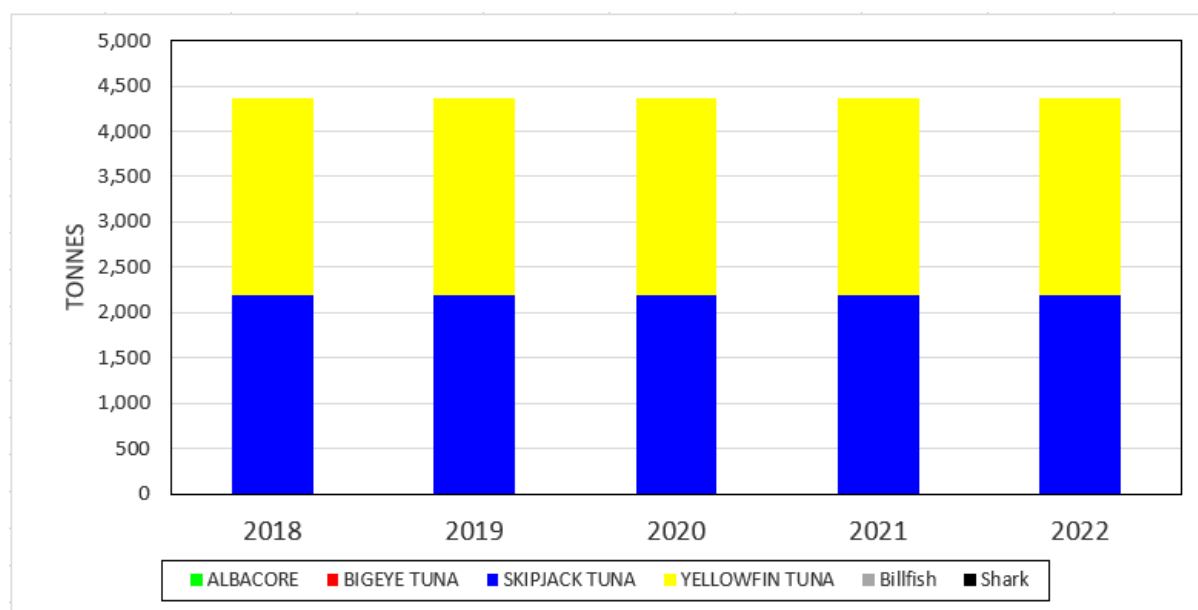


Figure 6. Depiction of catch by Artisanal fishery by Species, 2018-22.

4.2.5 Catch and Effort Distribution for Kiribati Vessels

Figure 7 and 8 illustrates effort distribution by Kiribati purse seines and longlines across the WCPO including species and catch size composition.

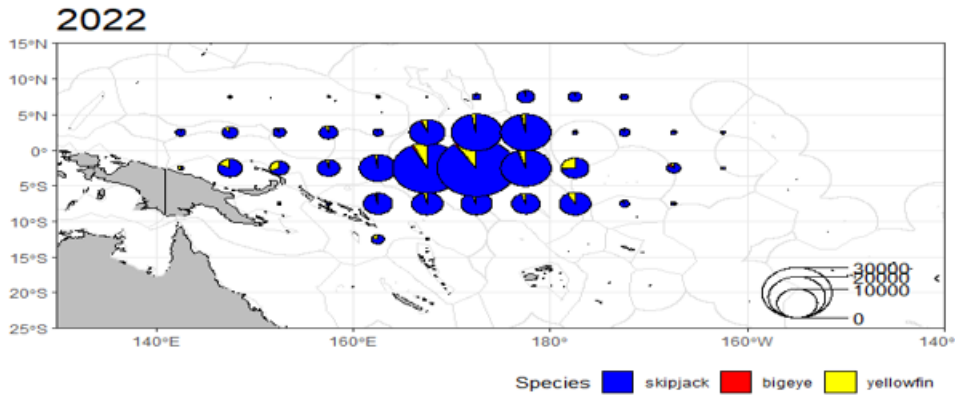


Figure 7. Effort distribution of Kiribati Purse seine inside the Convention Area, 2018-22.

Purse seine effort spanned across the equatorial region covering the three zones of Kiribati between 5°N and 10°S and 160°E to 150°W and 5°N and 10°S. The majority of catch is taken in the Gilbert group compared to the Phoenix and Line group. Catch is mainly Skipjack and Yellowfin tuna species.

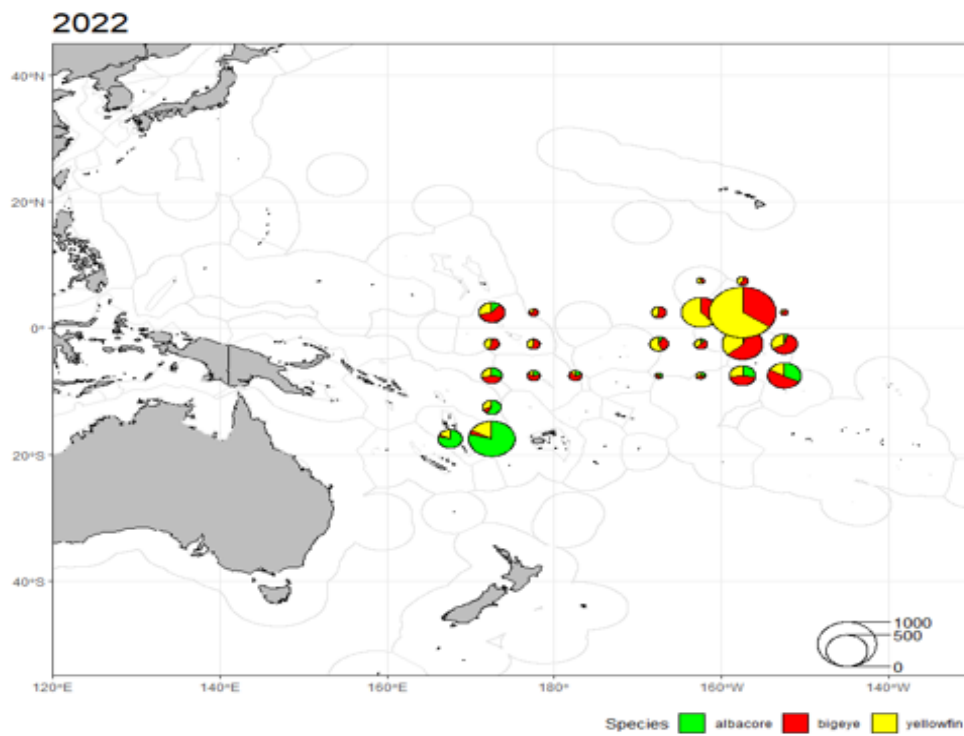


Figure 8. Effort Distribution of Kiribati Longline inside the Convention Area, 2018-22.

On the contrary, longline effort extended southward covering areas between 5°N and 15°S and 170°E and 145°W. Catch consists mainly of Bigeye, Yellowfin and Albacore however as stated earlier the latter is not the main fishery in Kiribati caught mostly in the southern Line Islands. Longline fishery effort is concentrated in the east while there is also significant catch in the Gilbert area.

5 Coastal State Reporting

The number of vessels licensed in 2018 was 302 then increase to 370 in 2019. Years 2020 and 2021 saw a slightly drop in licensed vessels with the most significant in 2022, a drop by 32% from that of 2019 (highest).

Table 8. Annual vessels licensed by Kiribati, 2018-22

Year	Bunker	Carrier	Longline	Other	Pole and Line	Purse Seiner	Total
2018	12	65	12	1	0	212	302
2019	13	89	51	0	1	216	370
2020	14	78	39	0	0	218	349
2021	14	75	39	0	0	213	341
2022	11	62	44	0	0	131	248

The majority of distant water fishing nations currently fishing inside Kiribati's EEZ came from Korea, Japan, Chinese-Taipei and the United States include domestic vessels operating under the FSMA arrangement. Fishing activities are managed under bilateral access arrangements, licence conditions, national laws and regulations, regional and international requirements for licensing.

In terms of gear, the Government permitted licensing of five main gears namely, purse seine, longline, pole-and-line including supporting vessels like tankers and reefer carriers. Although tankers and carriers are not catcher vessels they were defined as fishing vessels under the Fisheries Act 2010. The terms and conditions to manage access and activities of these fisheries vary between gears.

Japanese pole and line fishery is the only operator in this fishery inside Kiribati's EEZ through access agreement. However, their presence in the region and worldwide appears contracted in recent years.

5.1 Licensed Vessel by Gear

Kiribati fisheries is predominantly purse seine by gear type for it accounts to around 60% on average for vessel licensed from 2018-22. The number of purse seiners licensed annually is around 200 but year 2022 licensed less than 200. The bulk of which comes from Korea, Chinese-Taipei, Japan, and the United States.

Longline vessels were around 12 in 2018 following the closure of the fishery by Kiribati in 2017. Year 2019 saw sign of recovery in this fishery however note the increase confined to charter longline operating under locally owned companies, KFL and KIFL. Drop to longline was again noticeable in 2020 following the outbreak of COVID-19. Recovery in this fishery depends entirely on resumption of the fishery by the Government and in particular the affordable benchmark price of a day under the PNA Longline VDS.

Supporting vessels such as tankers and carriers have not fluctuated much since 2018. The number of tankers has been consistent on average around 14 vessels while the carriers slightly decrease to around 60 vessels at the end of 2022. The majority of reefer carriers registered under Panama flag.

Presence of the pole and line fishery continue to diminish the same trend observed in other waters. Their presence in Kiribati' EEZ is only limited to 1 vessel in 2019. There were also research vessels (other) chartered by SPC to conduct stock assessment and tuna tagging inside Kiribati' EEZ issued with licence by Kiribati authority. Overall trend shows a slight decrease in licensed vessels (since 2020) and perhaps the purse seiner is responsible for much of the fluctuations in vessel number between 2021 and 2022.

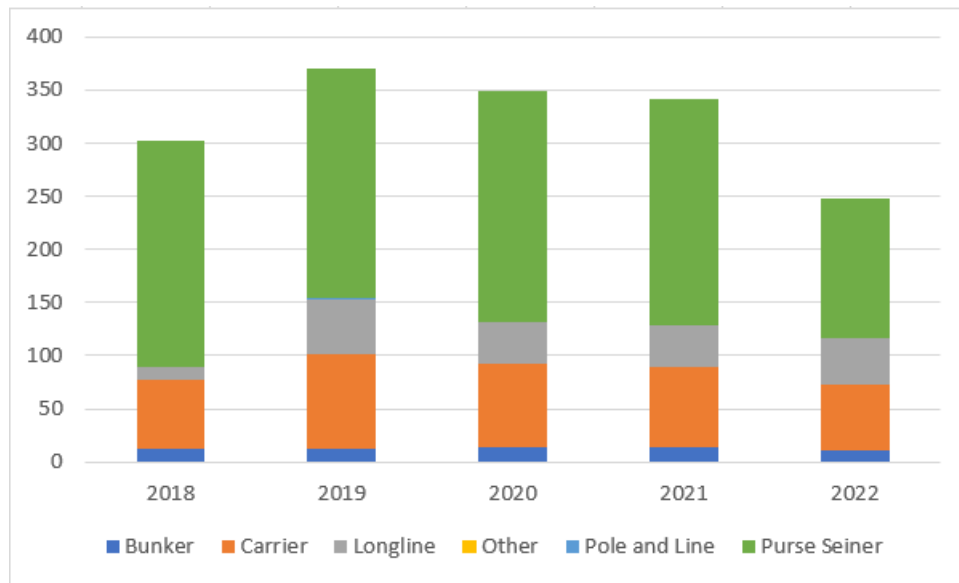


Figure 9. Depiction of annual licensed vessel by gear type, 2018-22.

5.2 Catch by Flag.

Figure 10 illustrates annual catch by major fishing fleets inside Kiribati EEZ for the period 2018-22. Apart from catch by national fleet, other major fishing fleet include Korea, Chinese-Taipei and the United States. Total catch by most fleets was high in 2019 but declined in 2020 and 2021 due in part to a general reduction of the purse seine catch for the WCPFC area, and a move of the main fishery to the west under La Nina conditions.

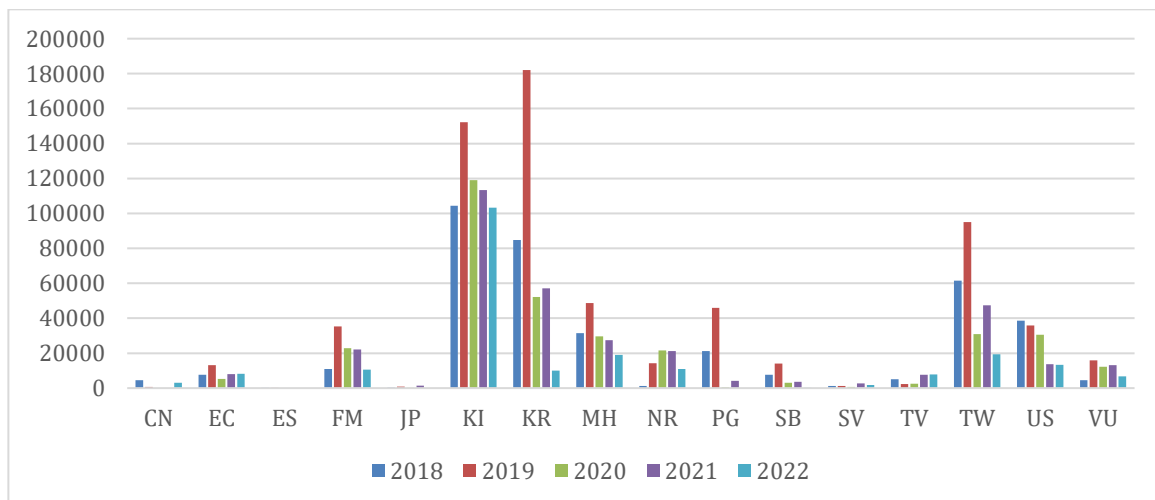


Figure 10. Depiction of annual catch by major fleet inside Kiribati EEZ, 2018-22.

Closure of Kiribati longline fishery to distant water fishing nations commenced in 2017 the result of which greatly impacted longline catch and effort in Kiribati's EEZ for proceeding years. KFL chartered vessels were exempted from this arrangement to continue fish for this fishery to supply the processing plant.

Fishing activities of licensed vessels is regulated through access agreements and licence conditions specific to each gear. This applies to all licensed foreign and domestic vessels however domestic vessels and charter vessels have exceptional arrangements with the Government of Kiribati such as access to the domestic fishing zone (DFZ) closed to vessels licensed under bilateral agreements, FAD exemptions and other concessions. Apart from these all vessels prohibited for conducting transshipment in High Seas, fish in closed areas and ban on fishing certain species, in particular shark under the Shark Regulation.

Like other licensed vessels effort distribution by flag vessels is heavily influenced by variations in climatic conditions and spatial distribution of stock in waters of national jurisdiction and areas where they hold a licence. Main target species for purse seiners are skipjack while chartered longline vessels target yellowfin tuna – the raw material required by the KFL. Other fish also caught as bycatch species.

6 Socio-economic factors

Recent domestication of a tuna industry has changed the way Kiribati negotiate access and licensed fishing vessels in its waters. This is exemplified by exit of DWFN longline after closure of the longline fishery for foreign vessels in 2017 and exemptions granted to joint venture vessels to fish inside Kiribati domestic fishing zones.

7 Disposal of Catch

Transshipment in port is compulsory for all licensed purse seiners. This allows monitoring of catch transshipped, provides for deterring IUU fishing in areas where the transshipping vessel fished and provide direct and indirect benefits from transshipment activity. While it is mandatory for purse seine vessel to transship in port, longlines were exempted to conduct transship outside port. This is aimed to minimize operational cost to KFL and to constantly supply the processing plant with tuna raw materials.

Under special access arrangements some companies required to land a certain portion of their catch to the KFL. These catches come in fresh (usually from longlines) and frozen from purse seiners. Landing volumes were processed and exported as fresh and frozen products (loins and fillets) to overseas markets. KFL holds commercial landing data and its major export markets include Japan, United States, EU, New Zealand, Australia, Vietnam, Hong Kong and Philippines. Under grade tunas including bycatch species sold locally for domestic consumption at cheaper prices.

8 Onshore Development

8.1 Processing Plant

KFL is the sole fishing company who has a processing establishment in the country. KFL is the joint venture entity established between the Government of Kiribati, Golden Ocean (Fiji) and Zhejiang Ocean Family (China). Established in 2010 the company operates mainly on longline fishery targeting overseas market in fresh and loin products. The company operates

from its headquarters in Betio, Tarawa and has contributed to employment of locals in the plant. Historical employment record obtained from KFL showed an increase trend from 55 staff in 2013 to 262 in 2018 then drop to 212 for 2020 and 2021 and again increase to 220 for 2022.

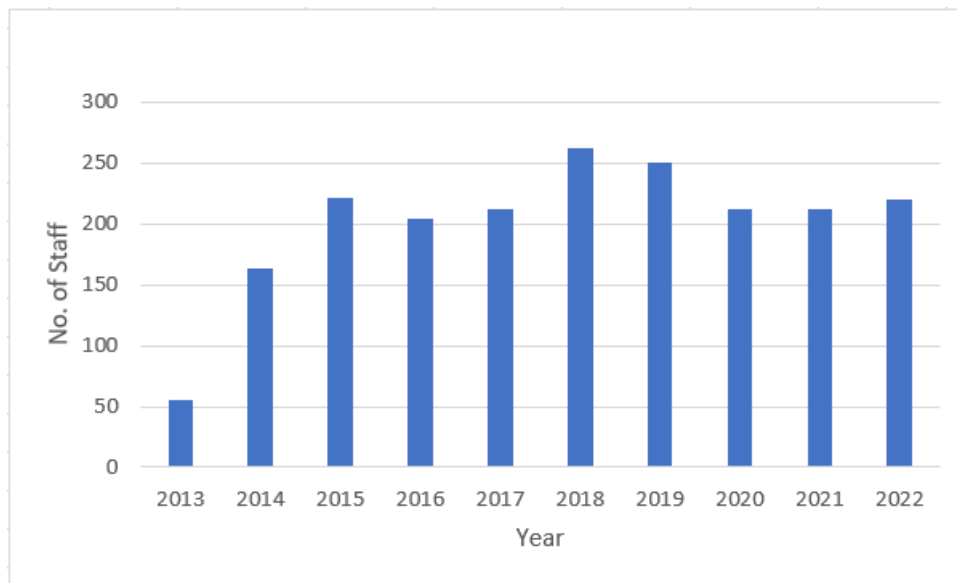


Figure 11. KFL staff and employment record, 2013-22.

Apart from the processing plant the company owns machineries such as side-lifters, crane trucks and chiller vehicles to assist production and transportation of fishery products for overseas exportation. The company also offered fisheries related services such as sale of fishing gears, fuel, baits, spare parts, and ice to local fishermen.

Expansion of KFL operation and support facilities would increase country export volume in future. The new JV company, KIFL is to be based in Kiritimati Islands in the Line Group but there is one new established operating facility in Ambo, Tarawa to assist with their current operation and accommodation of staff. The company purse seine and longline fleet are currently operating now.

8.2 Longline Vessel Project

The Government purchased three small-scale longline fleets in 2019. These vessels will contribute to tuna production at the domestic level and increase external market accessibility through KFL. These longline vessels are currently trialed by Central Pacific Producers Limited (CPPL) to assess its viability with a long-term aim of developing and expanding the longline fishery in future if the project proved economically successful.

9 Future Prospect of the Fishery

The long-term objective of the Government is to explore a wider benefit from participation in the value-added products for tuna through expansion of opportunities for direct and indirect employment in the fishing industry as well as conditioning licensed vessels to tie access with crewing. However, key to maximization of economic return from tuna fishing and greater protection of high value tuna species including commercially valuable pelagic and coastal fisheries through effective enforcement remains integral for long-term sustainability of the fisheries industry for the nation future prospect. Integration of fisheries management system

through a centralized database is essential for monitoring and conservation of fishery resources at all levels.

10 Status of Tuna Fishery Data Collection Systems

10.1 Logsheet Data Collection and Verification

Logsheet data collection and verification is an ongoing activity by fisheries. New recruited compliance officer and VMS Officer have improved monitoring activities in line with the Commission requirements and conservation management measures (CMMs). Logsheets can be received either through companies, operators of fishing vessels or through observers. Fishing report and timely data submission requirements enforced through licence conditions. Despite that, an efficient system is gravely needed to address existing gaps in data management including observer reports and transshipment.

10.2 Observer Programme

Observers remain an important tool to monitor and deter IUU fishing. The current arrangement requires 100% placement on purse seiners and 5% for longline vessels. Variance in coverage between these gears reflects the difference between the two gears in terms of operational behavior and working condition on these vessels. By comparison, longlines are more challenging than purse seiners. At the national level, Observer engagement with monitoring works on board vessels is back to normal after being relaxed due to COVID-19.

10.3 Port Sampling Programme

Kiribati supports SPC port sampling program however due to financial constraints the program ceased in 2014. Another reason is the absence of full time official and counterpart of SPC to take on the job. Observers normally tasked to undertake this job when they are not onboard. This proved ineffective when observers are not available. All data retrieved from port sampling activities were sent to SPC.

10.4 Unloading / Transshipment

The majority of transshipment activities conducted in port carried out between licensed fishing vessels and carrier boats. Transshipment is high when fishing favors Kiribati waters, particularly during El Niño periods. Since Kiribati does not have a canning factory fish from purse seiners normally transshipped to overseas destinations. In recent years, the Government imposed on licensed vessels a requirement to offload a certain portion of high-grade tuna species to KFL. This is an additional catch besides catch landed by KFL vessels to ensure sufficient raw materials needed for processing is maintained. All landing and export data currently held at KFL.

11 Research Activities Covering Target and Non-target Species.

Being a member to the WCPC, Kiribati is supportive to oceanic research activities and scientific stock assessment through issuance of licence to research vessels to conduct those activities in its EEZ. There was a position of a national tagging officer as a counterpart of SPC on tuna tagging exercise, but the post no longer exists now due to lack of specific fund for the post.



ADDENDUM TO ANNUAL REPORT PART 1

23 March 2023¹

SECTION A: SPECIFIC INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED IN ANNUAL REPORT PART 1 AS REQUIRED BY CMMS AND OTHER DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSION.

<p>CMM 2009-03 [Swordfish], Para 8</p>	<p>CCMs shall report to the Commission the total number of vessels that fished for swordfish and the total catch of swordfish for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. vessels flying their flag anywhere in the Convention Area south of 20°S other than vessels operating under charter, lease or other similar mechanism as part of the domestic fishery of another CCM; b. vessels operating under charter, lease or other similar mechanism as part of their domestic fishery south of 20°S; and c. any other vessels fishing within their waters south of 20°S. <p>This information shall be provided in Part 1 of each CCM’s annual report. Initially, this information will be provided in the template provided at Annex 2 for the period 2000-2009 and then updated annually.</p>
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¹ Reporting requirements requested by CMMs and decisions of the Commission, as of WCPFC19 (Dec 2022). First issued on 23 March 2023. Changes made from Addendum for 2021, include including the new CMM 2022-02 for North Pacific Swordfish and **WCPFC19 Agreed Audit Points**.

TABLE 1: CMM 2009-03. SWORDFISH, PARA.8 – REF: TUFMAN2, REPORT NO.2918

YEAR	CCM – FLAGGED VESSELS FISHED SOUTH OF 20DEGREE SOUTH		CHATTERED VESSELS		OTHER VESSELS FISHING WITHIN THE CCM’S WATERS SOUTH OF 20DEGREES SOUTH		
	CATCH IN METRIC TONNE	VESSEL NUMBER	CATCH IN METRIC TONNE	VESSEL NUMBER	FLAG	CATCH (TONNES)	VESSEL NUMBER
2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Note: WCPFC11 confirmed a common understanding that “total catch” in this reporting requirement refers to both targeted and bycatch catches of swordfish.*

AUDIT POINT [RP] The Secretariat confirms that the CCM submitted the required information contained in the template in Annex 2 of CMM in its AR Pt 1.

Observer coverage (WCPFC 11 decision – para 484(b))

CCMs are to compile and include in Annual Report Part 1 to be submitted from 2015 onwards, observer coverage for their longline fleet activity in the previous calendar year, noting that revisions can be provided at the annual TCC meeting.

TABLE 2: OBSERVER COVERAGE (WCPFC 11 decision – para 484(b))

CCM FLEET	YEAR	NO. OF TRIPS		
		TOTAL ESTIMATED	OBSERVER	%
KIRIBATI	2022			
		134	2	1.49

Observer Coverage is very low for 2022 due to Covid-19 pandemic which has left great impact on the placement of Observers. With this, the interim placement has just started in November as per WCPFC notice.

A sample report format is provided as guidance to assist CCMs with reporting

(WCPFC11 Summary Report Attachment L Table 4)

CCMs shall report on all transshipment activities covered by this Measure (including transshipment activities that occur in ports or EEZs) as part of their Annual Report in accordance with the guidelines at Annex II. In doing so, CCMs shall take all reasonable steps to validate and where possible, correct information received from vessels undertaking transshipment using all available information such as catch and effort data, position data, observer reports and port monitoring data.

WCPFC15 Outcome document para 48: The Commission agreed to the TCC14 recommendation that the template provided in TCC14-2018-RP03 Annex 3 be used by all applicable CCMs for their future reporting in Annual Report Part 1, as per CMM 2009-06 paragraph 11 (Attachment O of WCPFC15).

Annex 3 of RP03: Transshipment information to be provided annually by CCMs as required by CMM 2009-06 paragraph 11 in accordance with the guidelines in Annex II of the measure.

Each CCM shall include in Part 1 of its Annual Report to the Commission:

(1) the **total quantities, by weight**, of highly migratory fish stocks covered by this measure that were transhipped by fishing vessels the CCM is responsible for reporting against, with those quantities broken down by:

a) offloaded and received;	b) transhipped in port, transhipped at sea in areas of national jurisdiction, and	c) transhipped inside the Convention Area and transhipped outside the	d) caught inside the Convention Area and caught outside the Convention Area;	e) Species	f) Product Form	g) Fishing gear
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CMM 2009-06 [Transshipment], Para 11 (ANNEX II)		transhipped beyond areas of national jurisdiction	Convention Area;				
	Offloaded LL	All transshipment existed in port	Catches caught inside the convention Area	All transhipped inside the convention Area	SKJ	FROZEN	LL (0.0mt)
		All transshipment existed in port	Catches caught inside the convention Area	All transhipped inside the convention Area	YFT	FROZEN	LL (138.35mt)
		All transshipment existed in port	Catches caught inside the convention Area	All transhipped inside the convention Area	BET	FROZEN	LL (260.49mt)
	Offloaded PS	All transshipment existed in port	Catches caught inside the convention Area	All transhipped inside the convention Area	SKJ	FROZEN	PS (217,792.00mt)

	All transshipment existed in port	Catches caught inside the convention Area	All transhipped inside the convention Area	YFT	FROZEN	PS (13,530.68mt)
	All transshipment existed in port	Catches caught inside the convention Area	All transhipped inside the convention Area	BET	FROZEN	PS (2,854.36mt)
	All transshipment existed in port	Catches caught inside the convention Area	All transhipped inside the convention Area	OTH	FROZEN	PS (35.15mt)
received	All transshipment existed in port	Catches caught inside the convention Area	All transhipped inside the convention Area	SKJ	FROZEN	RC (73,775.00mt)

CMM 2009-06 [Transshipment], Para 11 (ANNEX II)		All transshipment existed in port	Catches caught inside the convention Area	All transhipped inside the convention Area	YFT	FROZEN	RC (6,497.12mt)
		All transshipment existed in port	Catches caught inside the convention Area	All transhipped inside the convention Area	BET	FROZEN	RC (2,506.85)
	(2) the number of transhipments involving highly migratory fish stocks covered by this measure by fishing vessels that is responsible for reporting against, broken down by:						
	a) offloaded and received	b) transhipped in port, transhipped at sea in areas of national jurisdiction, and transhipped beyond areas of national jurisdiction	c) transhipped inside the Convention Area and transhipped outside the Convention Area	d) caught inside the Convention Area and caught outside the Convention Area	e) fishing gear		
	54 PORT CALLS FOR OFFLOADED BY LL	All transshipment existed in port	All transhipped inside the convention Area	Catches caught inside the convention Area	LL		

194 PORT CALLS FOR OFFLOADING BY PS	All transhipment existed in port	All transhipped inside the convention Area	Catches caught inside the convention Area	PS
25 PORT CALLS BY RC received	All transhipment existed in port	All transhipped inside the convention Area	Catches caught inside the convention Area	RC

AUDIT POINT [RP] The Secretariat confirms receipt by the CCM in AR Pt 1 of the required information in the prescribed format contained at Annex II of CMM 2009-06, and confirms that the report includes the required information for all CCM transhipment events in the Convention Area of all HMFS covered by the Convention, as well as HMFS taken in the Convention Area and transhipped outside the Convention Area, in accordance with paras 10, 11, and 12 of CMM 2009-06.

CMM 2009-06 ANNEX II

TRANSHIPMENT INFORMATION TO BE REPORTED ANNUALLY BY CCMs

Each CCM shall include in Part 1 of its Annual Report to the Commission:

- (1) the total quantities, by weight, of highly migratory fish stocks covered by this measure that were transhipped by fishing vessels the CCM is responsible for reporting against, with those quantities broken down by:
 - a. offloaded and received;
 - b. transhipped in port, transhipped at sea in areas of national jurisdiction, and transhipped beyond areas of national jurisdiction;
 - c. transhipped inside the Convention Area and transhipped outside the Convention Area;
 - d. caught inside the Convention Area and caught outside the Convention Area;
 - e. species;
 - f. product form; and
 - g. fishing gear used

- (2) the number of transhipments involving highly migratory fish stocks covered by this measure by fishing vessels that is responsible for reporting against, broken down by:
 - a. offloaded and received;
 - b. transhipped in port, transhipped at sea in areas of national jurisdiction, and transhipped beyond areas of national jurisdiction;
 - c. transhipped inside the Convention Area and transhipped outside the Convention Area;
 - d. caught inside the Convention Area and caught outside the Convention Area; and
 - e. fishing gear.

<p>CMM 2011-03 [Impact of PS fishing on cetaceans], Para 5</p>	<p>CCMs shall include in their Part 1 Annual Report any instances in which cetaceans have been encircled by the purse seine nets of their flagged vessels, reported under paragraph 2(b).</p> <p>Kiribati flagged vessel has encounter 2 False Killer whales in 2022 and released them alive. This is to support the safety of the cetaceans as per the license condition of the Purse Seine, clause 29 which stated, " The vessel shall release protected species such as dolphins, turtles, sharks and sea birds in a manner that will provide the greatest chance of survival".</p> <p>AUDIT POINT [RP] Secretariat confirms that CCM submitted a report on instances in which cetaceans have been encircled by the purse seine nets of flagged vessels and as reported in ARPt1 under para 2(b) of CMM.</p>
<p>CMM 2018-03 [Seabirds] Para 13</p>	<p>CCMs shall annually provide to the Commission, in Part 1 of their annual reports, all available information on interactions with seabirds reported or collected by observers to enable the estimation of seabird mortality in all fisheries to which the Convention applies. (see below for Part 1 reporting template guideline). These reports shall include information on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the proportion of observed effort with specific mitigation measures used; and <p>In 2022, Kiribati vessels were not fished in the areas South of 30°S; 25°S-30°S; North of 23°N; or 23°N – 25°S as per TUFMAN2 reports #3317. However, the hooks observed only displayed as per TUFMAN report #3317 and it stated in Table X below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. observed and reported species specific seabird bycatch rates and numbers or statistically rigorous estimates of species-specific seabird interaction rates (for longline, interactions per 1,000 hooks) and total numbers. <p>AUDIT POINT [RP] The Secretariat confirms that CCM submitted a report using the reporting template in Annex 2 of CMM 2018-03 on seabird interactions reported or collected by observers.</p>

CMM 2018-03: [Seabirds] Annex 2. Guidelines for reporting templates for Part 1 report

The following tables should be included in the annual Part 1 country reports, summarizing the most recent five years.

Table x: Effort, observed and estimated seabird captures by fishing year for [CCM] [South of 30°S; 25°S-30°S; North of 23°N; or 23°N – 25°S¹]. For each year, the table gives the total number of hooks; the number of observed hooks; observer coverage (the percentage of hooks that were observed); the number of observed captures (both dead and alive); and the capture rate (captures per thousand hooks).

Year	Fishing effort				Observed seabird captures	
	Number of vessels	Number of hooks	Observed hooks	% hooks observed	Number	Rate ²
2022			501961			
[year]						
[year]						
[previous year e.g. 2017]						
[current year e.g. 2018]						

1 Insert 'North of 23°N', 'South of 30°S', '25°S-30°S' or '23°N – 25°S'. For CCMs fishing in all areas, provide separate tables for each area.

2 Provide data as captures per one thousand hooks.

Table y: Proportion of mitigation types¹ used by the fleet in [year].

	Proportion of observed effort using mitigation measures
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	Combination of Mitigation Measures	South of 30°S	25°S-30°S	25°S to 23°N	North of 23°N		
	No mitigation measures	0	0	235	0		
Options required south of 25°S	TL + NS	0	0	0	0		
	TL + WB	0	0	0	0		
	NS + WB	0	0	0	0		
	TL + WB + NS	0	0	0	0		
	HS	0	0	0	0		
Other options 25°S-30°S	WB	0	0	0	0		
	TL	0	0	0	0		
Other options north of 23°N	SS/BC/WB/DSLS	0	0	0	0		
	SS/BC/WB/(MOD or BDB)	0	0	0	0		
Provide any other combination of mitigation measures here	NS	0	0	41	0		

	Totals (must equal 100%)						

¹ TL = tori line, NS = night setting, WB = weighted branch lines, SS = side setting, BC = bird curtain, BDB = blue dyed bait, DSLS = deep setting line shooter, MOD = management of offal discharge, HS = hook-shielding device.

Table z: Number of observed seabird captures in [CCM] longline fisheries, 2012, by species and area.

Species	South of 30°S	25°S-30°S	North of 23°N	23°N –25°S	Total
E.g. Antipodean albatross					
[species name]					
[species name]					
[species name]					
[species name]					
[species name]					
[species name]					
Total					

Note: No data available for the above table as per report #3314 on Tufman 2 system.

SECTION B: ADDITIONAL ANNUAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS THAT COULD BE INCLUDED IN ANNUAL REPORT PART 1, IF NOT OTHERWISE REPORTED ANNUALLY TO WCPFC

<p>CMM 2006-04 [South- West striped Marlin], Para 4</p>	<p>In accordance with paragraph 1, CCMs shall provide information to the Commission, by 1 July 2007, on the number of their vessels that have fished for striped marlin in the Convention area south of 15°S, during the period 2000 – 2004, and in doing so, nominate the maximum number of vessels that shall continue to be permitted to fish for striped marlin in the area south of 15°S. CCMs shall report annually to the Commission the catch levels of their fishing vessels that have taken striped marlin as a bycatch as well as the number and catch levels of vessels fishing for striped marlin in the Convention Area south of 15°S.</p>									
	<p>CMM 2006-04 SOUTH-WESTSTRIPED MARLIN as bycatch, PARA 4: REF; TUFMAN2, REPORT # 2917</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="394 808 1348 998"> <thead> <tr> <th>Flag</th> <th>Year</th> <th>Vessel</th> <th>Catch (number)</th> <th>Catch (MT)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>KIRIBATI</td> <td>2022</td> <td>6</td> <td>8</td> <td>0.365</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>AUDIT POINT [RP] The Secretariat confirms that the CCM submitted in its ARPt1:</p> <p>a. the number of its flagged vessels that fished for MLS south of 15S between 2001-2004 and has nominated the maximum number of its flagged vessels that are permitted to continue to fish for MLS south of 15S</p> <p>b. the catch levels of CCM flagged vessels that have taken MLS as a bycatch</p> <p>the number and catch levels of its vessels fishing for MLS south of 15S.</p>	Flag	Year	Vessel	Catch (number)	Catch (MT)	KIRIBATI	2022	6	8
Flag	Year	Vessel	Catch (number)	Catch (MT)						
KIRIBATI	2022	6	8	0.365						

<p>CMM 2015-02</p> <p>[South Pacific Albacore] Para 4</p>	<p>CCMs shall report annually to the Commission the annual catch levels taken by each of their fishing vessels that has taken South Pacific albacore, as well as the number of vessels actively fishing for South Pacific albacore, in the Convention area south of 20°S. Catch by vessel shall be reported according to the following species groups: albacore tuna, bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, swordfish, other billfish, and sharks. Initially this information will be provided for the period 2006-2014 and then updated annually. CCMs are encouraged to provide data from periods prior to these dates.</p> <p>Addressed through the regular provision of operational catch/effort logsheet data to SPC, who automatically include these data in the WCPFC databases, as per our authorization.</p> <p>AUDIT POINT [RP] The Secretariat confirms that the CCM submitted information on annual catch levels by its flagged vessels taking SP Albacore, as well as the number of CCM flagged vessels actively fishing for SP Albacore south of 20S, with catch levels reported by species groups.</p>
<p>CMM 2019-03</p> <p>[North Pacific Albacore], Para 3</p>	<p>All CCMs shall report annually to the WCPFC Commission all catches of albacore north of the equator and all fishing effort north of the equator in fisheries directed at albacore. The reports for both catch and fishing effort shall be made by gear type. Catches shall be reported in terms of weight. Fishing effort shall be reported in terms of the most relevant measures for a given gear type, including at a minimum for all gear types, the number of vessel-days fished using the template provided in Annex 1.</p> <p>Note that Kiribati has no Albacore Fishery, no vessels targeted albacore, and no albacore were caught north of the equator.</p>

Annex 1:

Annex I: Average annual fishing effort for 2002-2004 and annual fishing effort for subsequent years for fisheries directed at North Pacific albacore in the North Pacific Ocean

CCM	Area ¹	Fishery	2002-04 Average		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year	
			No. of vessels	Vessel days	No. of vessels	Vessel days	No. of vessels	Vessel days	No. of vessels	Vessel days	No. of vessels	Vessel days	No. of vessels	Vessel days	No. of vessels	Vessel days

** Note: WCPFC10 clarified that this reporting responsibility lies with the flag State*

AUDIT POINT [RP] The Secretariat confirms that CCM submitted a report of information on catch and effort by CCM flagged vessels engaged in directed fishing for NP albacore north of the equator, by gear type and days fished (effort) and by weight (catch), using the template at Annex 1 of CMM 2019-03.

**CMM
2022-02
[North
Pacific
Swordfish],
para 4**

All CCMs shall report annually to the WCPFC Commission all catches of North Pacific swordfish in the Area and all fishing effort in those fisheries subject to the measures in paragraph 2, by gear type using the template provided in Annex 1.

Reports # 3513 on TUFMAN2 stated that no catch and effort made by Kiribati flag vessels in 2022 for the North Pacific Swordfish.

Note: CMM 2022-02 paragraph 3 clarifies that paragraphs 2 and 4 shall not be applied to those fisheries taking less than 200 metric tons of North Pacific swordfish in the Area per year. However, if the catches of such fisheries exceed 200 metric tons in any given year, the Commission shall adopt appropriate management measure for such fisheries.

Annex 1. Average annual fishing effort for 2008-2010 and annual fishing effort for subsequent years for fisheries taking North Pacific swordfish

CCM	Area ³	Fishery (gear type)	2008-2010 Average			Year			Year			Year		
			Catch (t)	No. of vessels	Fishing days ²	Catch (t)	No. of vessels	Fishing days	Catch (t)	No. of vessels	Fishing days	Catch (t)	No. of vessels	Fishing days