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**ANNUAL REPORT ON THE EASTERN HIGH SEAS POCKET SPECIAL
MANAGEMENT AREA (EHSP-SMA)**

WCPFC-TCC19-2023-RP06

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Prepared by the WCPFC Secretariat

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1 Purpose

This paper is the annual report on activities in the Eastern High Seas Pocket Special Management Area (EHSP-SMA).

The EHSP-SMA is the area of high seas bounded by the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) of the Cook Islands to the west, French Polynesia to the east and Kiribati to the north.

2 Introduction

The management and reporting arrangements for the EHSP-SMA were established through CMM 2010-02 Conservation and Management Measure for the Eastern High Seas Pocket Special Management Area which was updated by CMM 2016-02 with effect from 7 February 2017.

Vessels in the EHSP-SMA reporting to the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) are displayed as a “live list¹” on the secure EHSP-SMA page on the WCPFC website (<https://www.wcpfc.int/eastern-high-seas-pocket>). A sample screen shot of the “live list” is shown in Figure 1. Vessels shown in the live list are also directly linked to the WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels (RFV).

3 Review of available data

3.1 Vessel Sightings

Paragraph 2 of CMM 2016-02 encourages reporting of any fishing vessel sightings in the EHSP-SMA to the WCPFC Secretariat. During the reporting period, the Secretariat did not receive any sighting reports from flag CCMs².

3.2 Vessels and VMS reporting

Table 1 and Table 2 show the number of vessels by gear type and flag respectively, that reported VMS positions in the EHSP-SMA for each month from 2019 to May 2023.

Table 3 summarises entry and exit reporting by vessel flag and type. The tables indicate the primary activity is from Chinese Taipei flagged longline vessels mainly between February to October. During 2019 and 2020 there were similar numbers of vessels operating in the area (191 and 197). During 2021 and 2022, the number of vessels operating was 57% and 53% respectively, of the average of 2019 and 2020 numbers. This is likely to have been due to changes in operational activity arising from COVID-19. In 2023, the numbers of vessels operating has remain low in January and February but in March to May have risen to the highest level seen in the previous four years.

Table 3 and Table AI - 1 summarises the numbers of entry and exit alerts generated by the Commission VMS for 2019-2022. The reliability of entry and exit reporting generated by the Commission VMS has improved since 2020 and remains high. The lack of sightings of vessels reported to the Commission suggests there has been no vessels operating in the EHSP-SMA that have not been reporting to the Commission VMS although this cannot be verified.

More detail on the vessels operating in or transiting the EHSP-SMA is available in Annex 1 which lists the 63 vessels (55 LL, 6 PS, and 2 bunkers) that were reporting to the WCPFC VMS from the EHSP-SMA during 2022.

3.3 Fishing activity and catch

Figure 2 and Figure 3 show the proportion of catch by flag and in total tonnages since 2000 and includes a more detailed view of this data for more recent years 2018-2022.

Data for the purse seine fishery shows activity by one flag CCM for the three years 2012-2014, with the catch volumes of less than 500 tons. While some purse seine vessels have reported on the VMS within

¹In accord with CMM 2016-02 paragraph 5

²To assist with internal record keeping at the WCPFC Secretariat, copies of vessel sighting reports required in accordance with paragraph 2 of CMM 2016-02 are to be submitted the Commission and can be sent to the Secretariat by email: EasternHighSeasSpecialManagementArea@wcpfc.int.

the EHSP-SMA, no purse seine catch has been reported in the most recent years, further investigations shows that these records are transits and not fishing effort.

The historical flag CCM involvement in the EHSP-SMA longline fishery and their reported catch have changed over time, most significantly between 2003-2016.

Over the last six years (2017-2022) CCM involvement and longline catches have become less variable as shown by the total annual catches and CCM catch proportions (Figure 2³ and Figure 3). Longline catch peaked in 2012 and again in 2017, 2019 and 2020 at around 2000 tons with catch levels significantly lower in other years.

The main species taken from the EHSP-SMA by the longline fleet is albacore followed by yellowfin and bigeye tuna. Catch of the historical purse seine fleet was mainly skipjack with some yellowfin and bigeye (Figure 4 and Figure 5).

Over the most recent three years the average catch in the EHSP-SMA relative to the WCPO catch represents 1% for albacore, 0.03% for bigeye, 0.05% for yellowfin and less than 0.01% for skipjack.

3.4 Transshipment

CMM 2016-02 prohibited all transshipment activities in the EHSP-SMA from 1 January 2019. There was no report of transshipments in the EHSP-SMA.

The Secretariat has, with the addition of expert compliance analytical expertise, refined one of the analytical tools that assesses potential transshipments by identifying vessels with VMS positions in close proximity for 4 hours or more (Figure 6). More details on this tool are available in WCPFC-TCC19-RP03.

Between 2018-2023 there were a number of interactions between longliners and in a few cases longliners and bunker vessels from 4 flag CCMs. The majority of these were in 2020 and all except one of those were between longliners. This analysis indicates no interactions between carriers and catching vessels. Further refinement of this analysis will be undertaken based on additional data held by the Commission. This work will identify the extent to which further verification is possible or whether additional sources of data are needed to verify the vessel activity in discussion with the relevant CCMs. No information is provided from bunker vessels.

3.5 Compliance history

The Secretariat did not receive any reports of alleged infringements by vessels operating in the EHSP-SMA from monitoring, control and surveillance activities such as high seas boarding and inspections or aerial surveillance activities.

The outcomes of four historical cases for CMM 2010-02 02 (VMS entry and exit reporting) are shown in Figure 7. No cases have been reported under the replacement CMM 2016-02.

4 Review of CMMs 2010-02 and 2016-02 implementation under the Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS)

Figure 8 provides the result of the evaluation of CMMs 2010-02 and 2016-02 under the CMS over the years. CMM 2010-02 was evaluated annually between 2013 (for Reporting Year 2012) and 2016 (for Reporting Year 2015) and the replacement CMM 2016-02 was evaluated in 2020.

Figure 8 shows that between 2013-2016 there were ongoing implementation issues with the required entry and exit manual reporting. CMM 2016-02 removed the need for manual entry and exit reporting from 2017. Instead, alerts are automatically generated by the Commission VMS.

Transshipments have been banned in the EHSP-SMA since 1 January 2019 and an evaluation of implementation in 2020 indicated this has been duly implemented by CCMs in legally binding instruments.

5 Recommendations

1. TCC18 is invited to note the report on the activities in the EHSP-SMA.

³Source : SPC data "Annual catch estimates by EEZ"

Tables

Table 1: Number of vessels by vessel type year and month in EHSP-SMA-SMA (Source: WCPFC VMS data).

Vessel type	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2019												
Bunker	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Fish carrier	1	0	2	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	0
Longliner	0	8	22	24	37	22	12	11	20	24	10	4
Purse seiner	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	2	8	24	27	37	24	13	12	20	26	11	5
2020												
Bunker	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	2	0	0	0
Fish carrier	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Longliner	3	12	16	24	27	25	32	24	11	15	7	0
Pole and line	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Purse seiner	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
Total	4	12	17	25	28	25	33	27	15	15	7	3
2021												
Bunker	1	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	1	0	0	0
Fish carrier	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Longliner	3	16	15	9	17	17	9	6	10	5	2	1
Purse seiner	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	8	16	15	10	18	18	11	6	11	5	2	2
2022												
Bunker	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Longliner	0	5	10	7	11	11	16	21	14	2	2	1
Purse seiner	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Total	2	6	10	8	12	11	16	23	14	2	3	2
2023												
Fish carrier	1	0	1	0	0							
Longliner	1	3	30	28	39							
Purse seiner	0	1	0	1	0							
Total	2	4	31	29	40							

Table 2: Number of vessels by CCM year and month in EHSP-SMA-SMA (Source: WCPFC VMS data).

Flag CCM	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2019												
Cook Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
China	0	0	4	1	20	7	1	1	6	11	4	0
Fiji	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
Liberia	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Panama	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0
Chinese Taipei	0	7	18	22	17	15	12	9	14	11	3	4
United States of America	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vanuatu	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0
Total	2	8	24	27	37	24	13	12	20	26	11	5
2020												
Cook Islands	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
China	1	5	11	4	2	5	3	6	3	2	0	0
Panama	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	2	0	0	0
Chinese Taipei	2	7	6	20	25	20	29	18	9	13	7	0
United States of America	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
Total	4	12	17	25	28	25	33	27	15	15	7	3
2021												
Cook Islands	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
China	3	8	0	0	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	0
EU-Netherlands	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Panama	2	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Chinese Taipei	0	8	15	9	14	14	8	5	10	5	2	1
United States of America	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	8	16	15	10	18	18	11	6	11	5	2	2
2022												
Cook Islands	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
China	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	8	0	0	0	0
EU-Spain	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chinese Taipei	0	5	9	7	7	10	14	12	13	2	0	1
United States of America	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Vanuatu	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	1	0	2	0
Total	2	6	10	8	12	11	16	23	14	2	3	2
2023												
China	1	2	8	6	5							
EU-Spain	0	0	0	1	0							
Chinese Taipei	1	1	23	22	34							
United States of America	0	1	0	0	0							
Total	2	4	31	29	40							

Table 3: Summary of entry and exit alerts for the EHSP-SMA generated by the Commission VMS by flag in 2022 (including transit reports).

CCM	Vessel type	Number of vessels on VMS	Reported entry alerts	Reported exit alerts
Cook Islands	Bunker	2	2	2
	Purse seiner	1	3	3
China	Longliner	12	12	12
EU-Spain	Purse seiner	2	2	2
Chinese Taipei	Longliner	38	59	59
United States of America	Purse seiner	2	2	2
Vanuatu	Longliner	3	7	7

Figures



Figure 1: A sample screen shot of the “live list” on the WCPFC website.

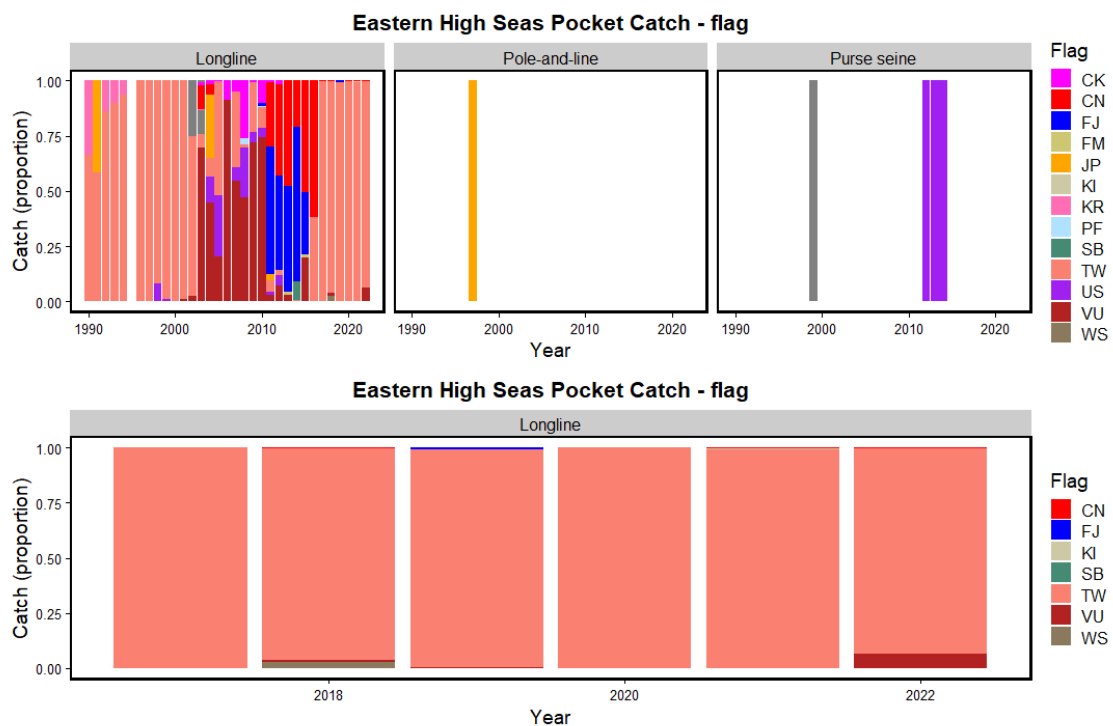


Figure 2: Proportion of catch made by flag in the EHSP-SMA LL and PS fleets 2000-2021.

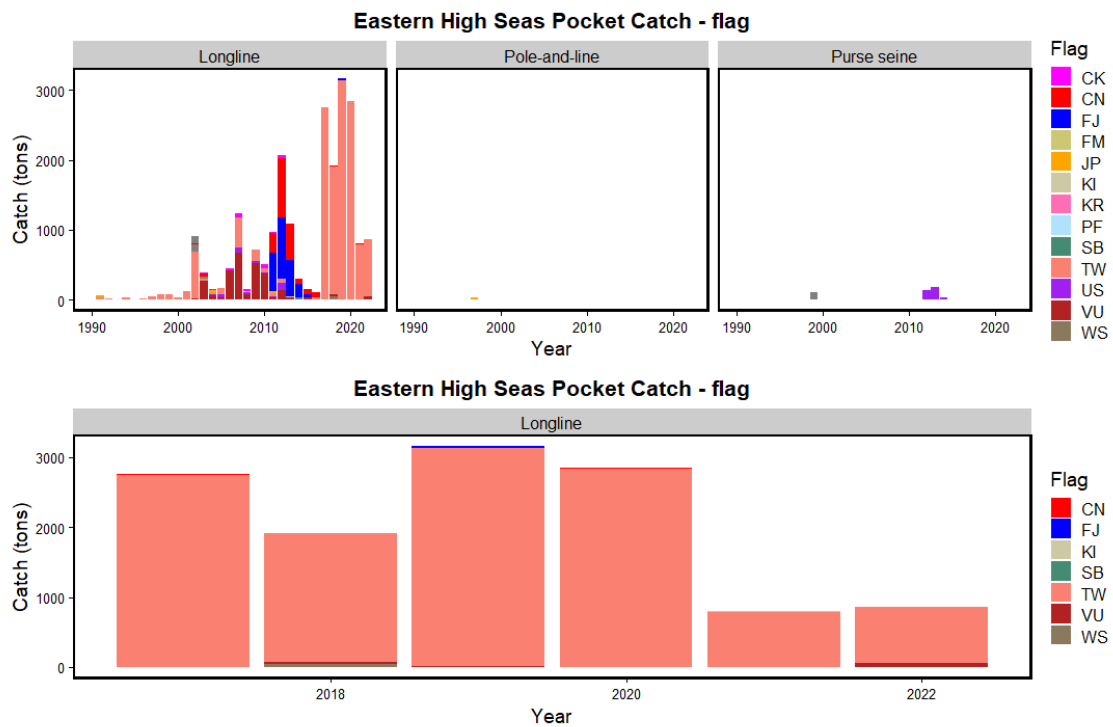


Figure 3: Catch from in the EHSP-SMA LL and PS fleets 2000-2021.

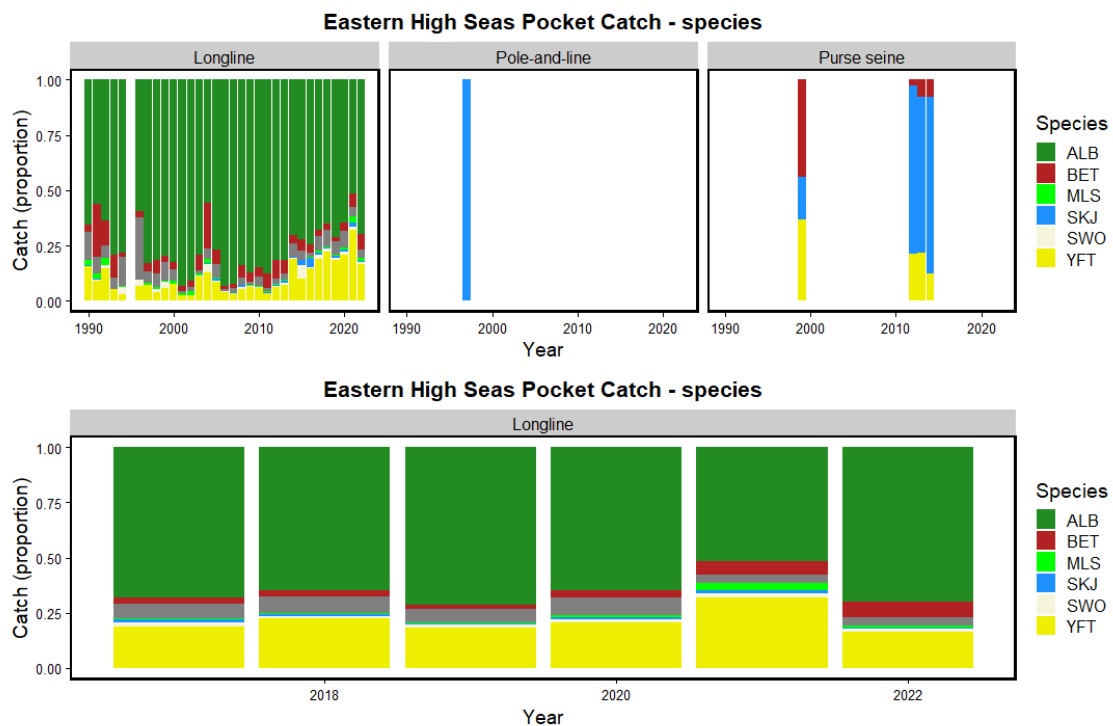


Figure 4: Proportion and catch made in EHSP-SMA by LL and PS fleets 2000 - 2021. *Overview of tuna fisheries in the WCP0, Including Economic Conditions - 2021 WCPFC-SC18-2022/GN IP-1.*

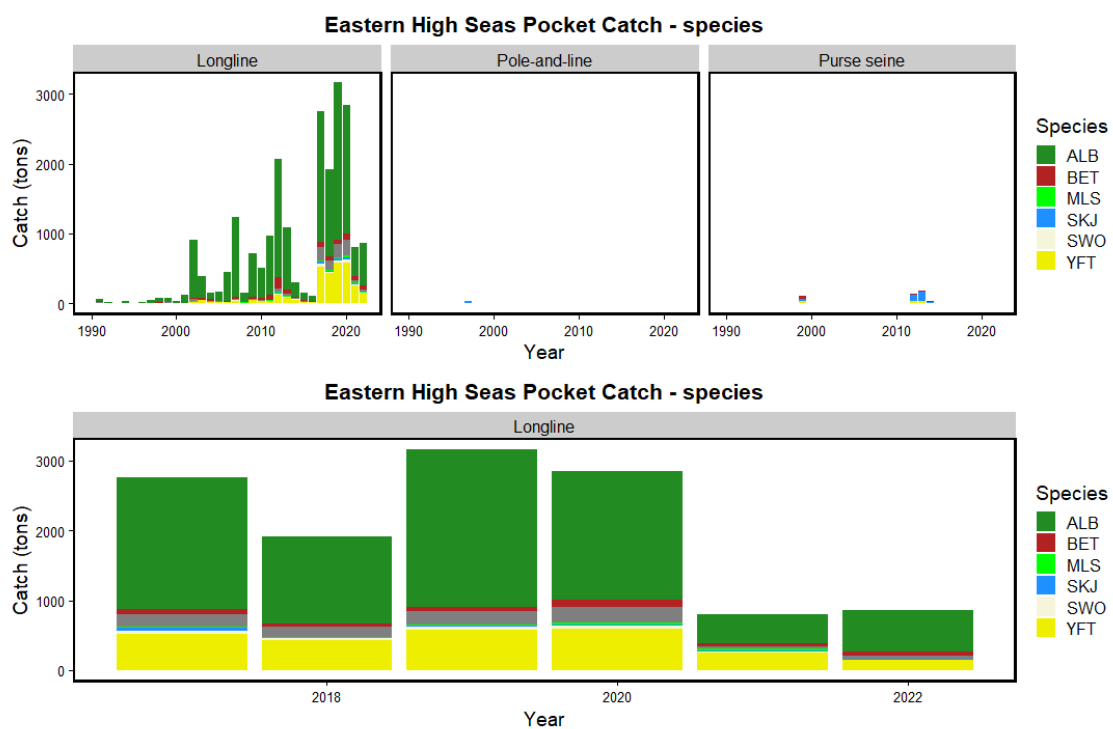


Figure 5: Catch made in EHSP-SMA by LL and PS fleets 2000 - 2021. *Overview of tuna fisheries in the WCPO, Including Economic Conditions - 2021 WCPFC-SC18-2022/GN IP-1.*

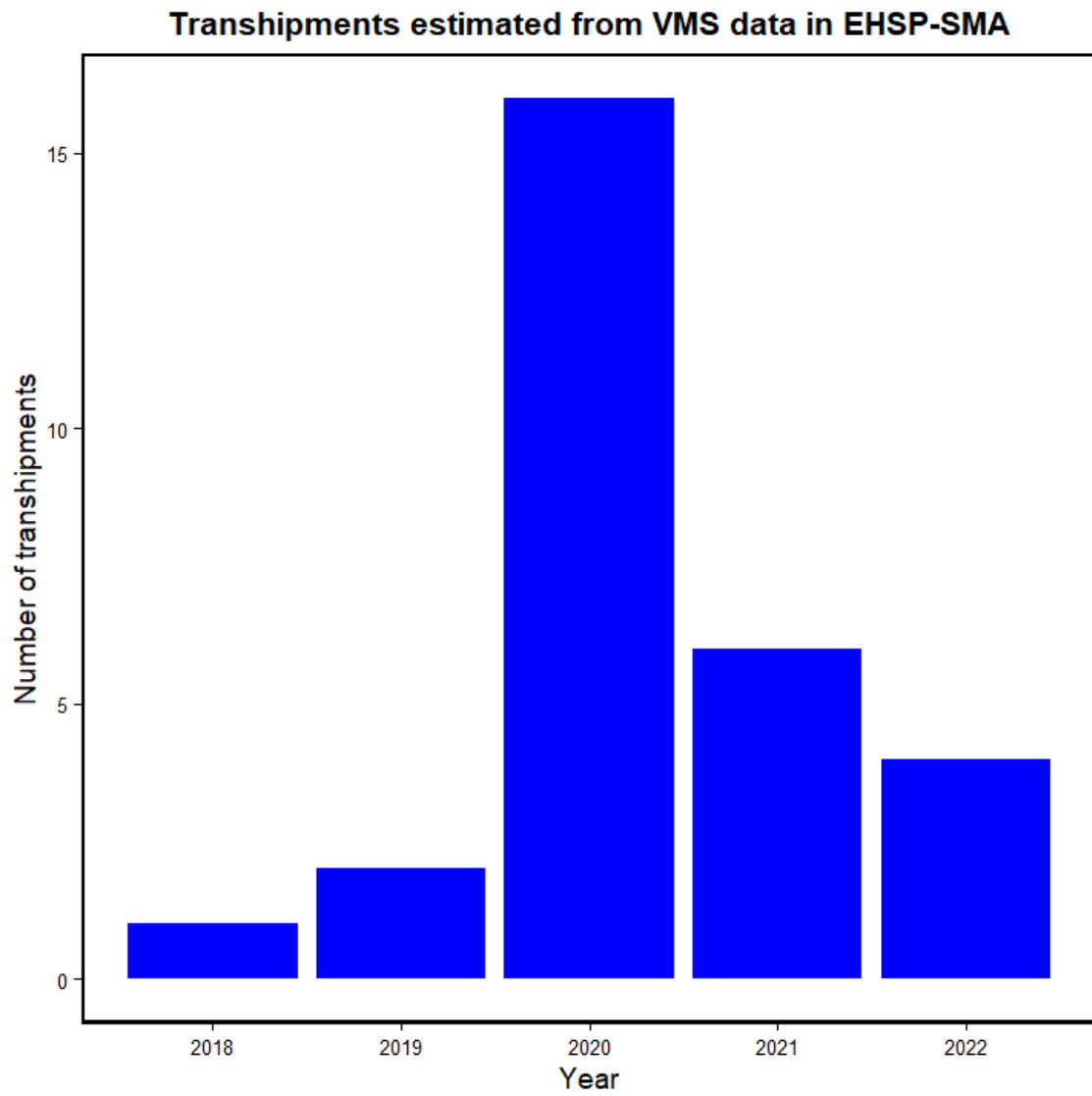


Figure 6: The number of transhipment events estimated through VMS analysis in the EHSP-SMA.

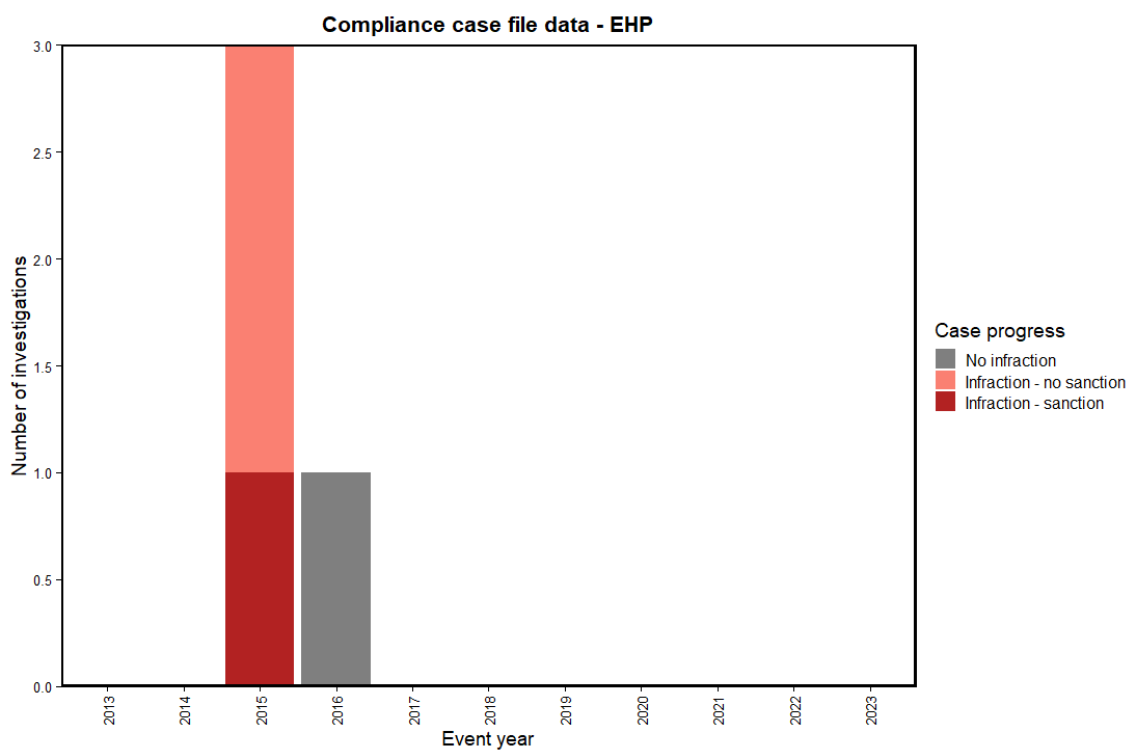


Figure 7: The outcomes of four compliance cases under CMM 2010-02 02.



Figure 8: CMR Compliance Score relating to eastern high seas pocket related requirements over the years it was assessed.

Annex I

Table AI - 1: Summary of entry and exit alerts within the EHSP-SMA generated by the Commission VMS by flag from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2021 (includes transiting vessels).

Year	CCM	Vessel type	Number of vessels on VMS	Reported entry alerts	Reported exit alerts
2019	Cook Islands	Bunker	2	2	2
	China	Fish carrier	1	2	2
		Longliner	25	36	36
	Fiji	Longliner	1	2	2
	Liberia	Fish carrier	2	2	2
	Panama	Bunker	1	1	1
		Fish carrier	3	4	4
	Chinese Taipei	Fish carrier	1	1	1
		Longliner	40	92	92
	United States of America	Purse seiner	2	2	2
Vanuatu	Bunker	1	1	1	
	Longliner	5	6	6	
2020	Cook Islands	Bunker	2	2	2
	China	Fish carrier	1	2	2
		Longliner	29	38	38
	Panama	Bunker	3	4	4
		Fish carrier	1	1	1
	Chinese Taipei	Longliner	55	100	100
	United States of America	Pole and line	1	2	2
		Purse seiner	3	3	3
2021	Cook Islands	Bunker	1	6	6
	China	Longliner	18	19	19
	EU-Netherlands	Fish carrier	1	1	1
	Panama	Bunker	1	3	3
		Fish carrier	2	2	2
	Chinese Taipei	Longliner	39	56	56
	United States of America	Purse seiner	2	2	2
2022	Cook Islands	Bunker	2	2	2
		Purse seiner	1	3	3
	China	Longliner	12	12	12
	EU-Spain	Purse seiner	2	2	2
	Chinese Taipei	Longliner	38	59	59
	United States of America	Purse seiner	2	2	2
Vanuatu	Longliner	3	7	7	
2023	China	Fish carrier	2	2	2
		Longliner	29	41	41
	EU-Spain	Purse seiner	1	1	1
	Korea (Republic of)	Bunker	1	1	1
	Panama	Bunker	1	1	1
	Chinese Taipei	Longliner	49	111	111
	United States of America	Purse seiner	1	1	1
Vanuatu	Bunker	1	1	1	

Annex II

Table AII - 1: Complete list of all vessels within the EHSP-SMA reporting to WCPFC VMS in 2022 (includes transiting vessels).

Flag	ID	Vessel name	Call sign	Vessel type
Cook Islands	9458	HAI SOON 26	E5U3271	Bunker
	11819	PROGRESS 10	E5U3586	Bunker
	9565	JEANNINE	E5U3579	Purse seiner
China	10474	PINGTAIRONG50	BZ4VU	Longliner
	10476	PINGTAIRONG55	BZ5VU	Longliner
	10478	PINGTAIRONG58	BZ6VU	Longliner
	10479	PINGTAIRONG60	BZ7VU	Longliner
	124	PINGTAIRONG301	BZW2P	Longliner
	12077	PINGTAIRONG131	BZW3P	Longliner
	10547	PINGTAIRONG65	BZ8VU	Longliner
	12078	PINGTAIRONG688	BZZQ4	Longliner
	11891	YUANYOU516	BZU5Q	Longliner
	10149	PINGTAIRONG19	BZ2VT	Longliner
	11778	ZHONGYANG88	BZXE6	Longliner
EU-Spain	9268	QINGYUANYU012	BZZQ3	Longliner
	5285	ROSITA C	EAHJ	Purse seiner
	5274	AURORA B	EAQT	Purse seiner
Chinese Taipei	3997	SHANG SHUN NO.622	BI2541	Longliner
	9888	YU FENG NO.513	BG3695	Longliner
	10679	CHI HONG NO.899	BH3418	Longliner
	3846	CHUAN HSIANG NO.368	BJ4814	Longliner
	10591	CHI HSIANG NO.889	BH3417	Longliner
	5417	CHI TSAI NO.988	BG3789	Longliner
	9827	JIN HONG CHENG	BG3692	Longliner
	3489	SHENG JI CYUN NO.3	BJ4240	Longliner
	3799	YU FENG NO.128	BJ4752	Longliner
	9688	MAAN YIH FENG NO.366	BG3681	Longliner
	3780	MAAN YIH FENG NO.26	BJ4719	Longliner
	5400	MAAN YIH FENG NO.266	BJ4925	Longliner
	3810	YU FENG NO.33	BG3807	Longliner

Table AII:1 Continued:

Flag	ID	Vessel name	Call sign	Vessel type
Chinese Taipei	3870	CHUAN HSIANG NO.866	BJ4842	Longliner
	5337	YU LONG FA NO.22	BJ4878	Longliner
	4462	SHUN WUN FA NO.168	BJ5008	Longliner
	4056	YI RONG NO.18	BJ4393	Longliner
	3704	MAAN YIH FENG NO.16	BJ4590	Longliner
	5408	MAAN YIH FENG NO.166	BG3830	Longliner
	5358	SHENG I TSAI NO.368	BJ4889	Longliner
	5406	YU LONG FA NO.36	BJ4931	Longliner
	3871	LI HUNG NO.666	BJ4843	Longliner
	12091	CHUAN FA SHIAN NO.288	BG3794	Longliner
	4607	MAN YING CAI NO.6	BJ5013	Longliner
	3880	LUNG SOON NO.116	BI2575	Longliner
	3994	CHIEN CHANG NO.326	BI2536	Longliner
	4526	YING RONG NO.638	BI2578	Longliner
	5363	CHUAN FA SHIAN NO.88	BJ4910	Longliner
	3545	CHAO YI NO.368	BG3814	Longliner
	10776	HUANG FU	BI2473	Longliner
	3771	YU LONG	BJ4704	Longliner
	3333	YU LONG NO.12	BJ3721	Longliner
	3721	SHIN JYI WANG NO.6	BG3824	Longliner
	3849	SHIN JAAN SHIN	BG3817	Longliner
5380	YU LONG FA NO.168	BG3792	Longliner	
12115	YI RONG NO.268	BH3528	Longliner	
5025	SHIN JAAN SHIN NO.368	BJ4976	Longliner	
3940	SHANG SHUN NO.112	BI2375	Longliner	
United States of America	4347	SEA ENCOUNTER	WTF4069	Purse seiner
	11446	EVELINA DA ROSA	WDI8477	Purse seiner
Vanuatu	4279	LONGBOW NO.1	YJSL6	Longliner
	8715	LONGBOW NO.7	YJRT7	Longliner
	11166	YI SHUN NO.101	YJTZ2	Longliner