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**ANNUAL REPORT – PART 1
INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH, AND STATISTICS**

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TUVALU

Tuvalu Part 1 Report 2008

Submission to the 4th Regular Meeting

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Summary

Tuvalu tuna resource is targeted both by local and foreign fishing fleets. The local fleet however operates on a very small scale supplying only the domestic market. In contrast the foreign fleet with their highly sophisticated vessels account for most of the fishing mortality.

A record total of 33,181.5 tons of fishing mortality was reported in 2007, of which 99.9% was landed by the foreign fleet. The purse seine fleet alone contributed 98% to the total reported catch. Long line catches were not readily available.

Tuvalu licensed a record number of foreign fishing boats this year, the highest ever registered. 60% were purse seiners, 37% long liners and the remaining 3% were pole & line boats.

Monitoring of the foreign fleets remained a challenge for the Tuvalu government especially now with the recent increase in world fuel prizes.

1. Background to the Fishery

Tuvalu tuna fishery is exploited mainly by distant water fishing nations. The NaFICOT (national Fishing Corporation) once operated two long liners. However, these long liners being short-lived resulted in the sudden demise of the corporation. Its absence enabled small scale artisanal tuna fishing to be established. These small scale artisanal fishers operated from small wooden skiff, powered by outboard engine. The size of these skiffs range from 16ft to 20ft. These small crafts mainly target both skipjack and yellow fin tuna species.

Government continue to make available fishing permits to distant water fishing nations. Vessels registered come from all the different parts of the world. Licensed vessels are strictly those with proven good standing status on the FFA vessel register.

Monitoring of fishing activities by these foreign vessels is achieved through the use of the VMS. Surface surveillance patrolling is also conducted but is irregular and infrequent.

2. Fleet Structure

2.1 Distant Water Fishing fleets in Tuvalu waters for the past five years

The number of fishing vessels for all the three different fleet has dramatically increased in 2007 compared to any other year. In comparison to 2006 level,

- The long line fleet increased by 113%;
- The pole and line fleet, the growth was 100%;
- The purse seine fleet attained a growth of 244%.

The table below provides a summary of the numbers by fleet and flag for the last five years.

Table1. Summary of the fishing fleet by type and flag for this reporting period.

Gear type	Nationalities	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
LL	China	0	0	0	0	3
	Cook Island	0	0	0	0	2

	Fiji	0	2	1	1	0
	Japan	0	2	0	0	0
	Korea	12	51	42	34	87
	Taiwan	7	0	8	10	3
	Vanuatu	0	0	0	0	1
	Total	19	55	51	45	96
PL	Japan	7	19	3	3	6
	Total	7	19	3	3	6
PS	China	0	0	0	0	1
	Japan	35	36	29	50	39
	FSM	2	1	0	0	0
	Korea	0	0	0	0	27
	Marshall	0	0	0	0	5
	Netherlands	0	1	1	2	1
	New Zealand	4	5	4	6	7
	PNG	0	0	1	1	0
	Taiwan	1	6	8	15	17
	US	20	20	14	26	38
	Vanuatu	0	0	0	0	20
	Total	62	69	57	45	155

(Source: Fisheries Department database, Tuvalu)

3. Annual Catch estimates by fleet type between 2003 and 2007

Annual catch statistics is derived from the catch forms received from licensed vessels at the end of each fishing trip. Copies of the same form are transmitted to SPC for analysis and safe keeping. For the US fleet, observer reports supplement those submitted by the vessels.

3.1 Long-line

Despite the large increase in the number of vessels, the catch is surprisingly very low compare to that reported for 2005, the highest catch since 2003. By contrast the fleet size was 47% fewer in 2005.

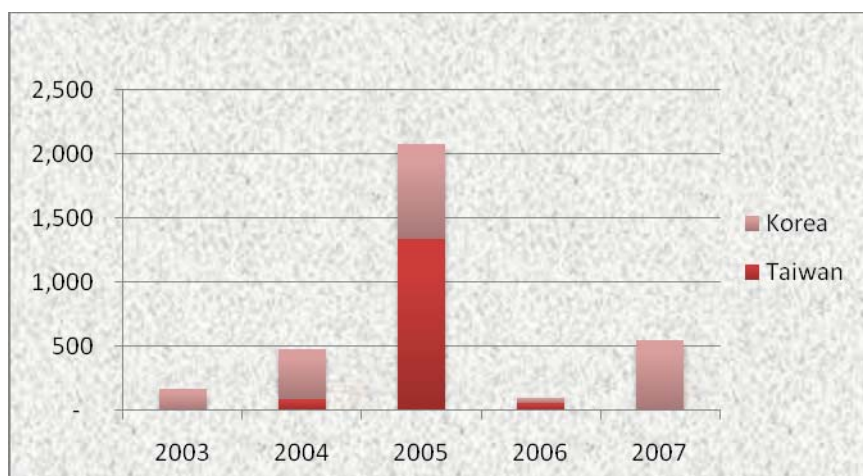
Table 2 Annual catches by the long line fleet for this reporting period.

Year	ALB	YFT	BET	OTH	TOTAL
2003	18	67	81	-	166
2004	53	257	172	-	482
2005	212	754	1,117	-	2,083

2006	3	38	54	-	95
2007	47	257	151	91	546

(Source: TUFMAN database operated by SPC)

Fig 1: Annual catch by flag for the specified period



3.2 Pole and line

Japan is the only fishing nation still engaging in pole and line fishing. Unfortunately, there are no data available on the catch landed by the fleet for the past three years.

Table 3 annual catches by the pole and line fleet between 2003 and 2007.

Year	SKJ	YFT	BET	OTH	TOTAL
2003	1	0	0	0	1
2004	242	1	0	0	243
2005	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2006	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2007	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

(Source: TUFMAN database operated by SPC)

3.3 Purse Seine

The fleet landed a record catch of 32,606 tonnes for this reporting period. This peaked catch corresponds to the increase in purse seiners.

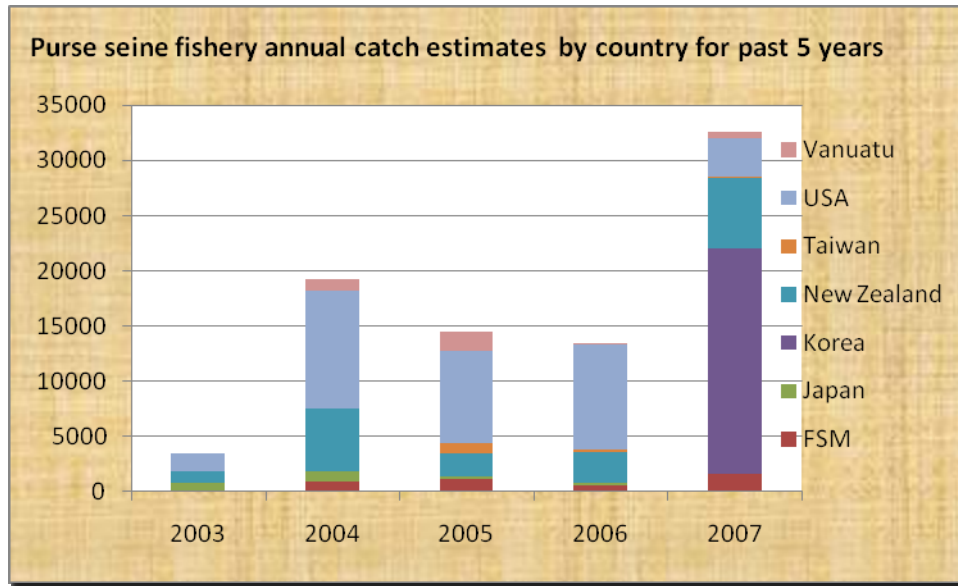
Table 4 annual catches made by the purse seiners for the past five years.

Annual total catches (tons)						
Year	Days	SKJ	YFT	BET	OTH	TOTAL
2003	262	2,706	706	87	0	3,499
2004	1,006	15,021	3,217	1,043	0	19,281

2005	496	12,849	1,331	323	0	14,503
2006	659	11,459	1,410	629	0	13,498
2007	723	30,556	1,837	212	1	32,606

* catches for 2007 is provisional (Source: TUFMAN database)

Figure 2 shows the annual catch landed by flag for the purse seine fishery.



6. Annual Domestic/Artisanal Tuna Catches.

6.1 Manual Trolling Fleet 2001-2005

The annual catch presented below represents the catch landed and received by the fishing centres. It therefore does not reflect the actual catch landed. This is simply because these fishers sometimes sell their catch directly to the consumers and these transactions are not usually collected nor documented. The catch shown below also does not include fish caught by artisanal fishermen on Funafuti.

Table 5: Annual catches landed by artisanal fishermen

Year	YFT	SKJ	Others	Total
2003	9.5	43.5	6.5	59.5
2004	13.9	14.8	4.5	33.2
2005	11.3	8.2	3.9	23.4
2006	3.3	9.1	2.3	14.7
2007	9	17.2	3.3	29.5

(Source: Fisheries database)

7. Management and Compliance 2007

7.1 Surveillance

Surveillance activities are usually conducted by the police department in collaboration with the Australian government. The Australian government maintained its financial and technical support. This enabled Tuvalu meets its surveillance commitment.

Two surveillance patrol trips were made by our lone patrol boat this year. The number of trips fell short of that in the previous year. Overall there is a downward trend in the number of annual patrolling conducted. This may be attributed to the inflation in world fuel prizes.

8. Tuna Research and Development

8.1 National Fisheries Observer Program

A national observer program is highly desired but this depends on funding availability.

8.2 Data Collection System

Currently, there is no mechanism in place to deal with the collection of coastal fisheries data. This is one priority area that the department is so keen to develop in the near future.

9. Future Prospects for Developments

Tuvalu government has already signed a joint venture with one fishing company from Taiwan. The JV will focus on developing Tuvalu purse seine fishery. A new fishing boat is envisioned to be completed in the near future.