



**Western and  
Central Pacific  
Fisheries  
Commission**

**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE  
TWENTIETH REGULAR SESSION**

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

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**WCPFC-SC20-AR/CCM-24**

**TOKELAU**



**2023 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE WESTERN AND CENTRAL PACIFIC FISHERIES COMMISSION  
PART 1: INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH, AND STATISTICS**

Scientific data was provided to the Commission in accordance with the decision relating to the provision of scientific data to the Commission by 30 April 2024	<b>Yes</b>
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## ABSTRACT

Tokelau does not have a commercial fishing fleet however, it has a large artisanal fleet of about 200 small 10' to 16' motorised aluminium boats powered by 15-40HP outboard motors. These artisanal fishing boats operate within the 12nm Territorial Sea (TS), but generally do not venture out further than 5nm from shore. For food security purposes, Tokelau has also established a buffer zone (closed area) of 13nm extending from the 12nm TS closed to any foreign fishing.

Coverage of Tokelau artisanal data continues to improve since the introduction of the SPC TAILS software in 2016. The total tuna catch reported from this fishery in 2023 was 50 metric tons (mt) with skipjack (50%) and yellowfin (50%) tunas making up the majority of the catch composition.

The commercial fishery in Tokelau is comprised of purse seine and longline vessels operating under various multilateral, regional and bilateral agreements. In 2023, the total catch by the purse seine and longline fisheries were 1,130.53 mt and 3,450.9 mt, respectively. Both fisheries are managed in full compliance with the vessel day schemes (VDS) established under the Palau Arrangement.

Transshipment is permitted to occur in the Tokelau Exclusive Zone (EEZ), TS and Internal Waters where there are exceptional circumstances and prior approval provided. Tokelau did not approve any transshipment activity in her waters in 2023.

## ANNUAL FISHERIES INFORMATION

### National Fleet – Artisanal Tuna Fishery

Tokelau's artisanal fleet consists of around 200, small 10' – 16' outboard motorised aluminium boats operating out of the three atolls. These vessels fish primarily for local consumption and use surface trolling and vertical handline methods that mainly target skipjack and yellowfin tuna.

Most artisanal fishing activities in Tokelau's waters occur within 5 nautical miles from shore. Inshore fisheries are conserved and managed to meet the food security and cultural needs of each atoll, as specified in the Tokelau Fisheries Policy. Domestic fisheries development in Tokelau is severely constrained by market access and lack of infrastructure.

Any commercial inshore fisheries developments need to be authorized by the Taupulega (Village Council) of each respective atoll and is subject to a cost-benefit and market analysis, and an environmental impact assessment to demonstrate it will not jeopardize her food security and will result in creating net economic gains.

Table 1 provides the annual catch estimates by the Tokelau artisanal fleet in the last years, based on data collected through the SPC TAILS software.

**Table 1:** *Estimated Artisanal tuna catches in Tokelau waters, 2019-2023*

Year	RAISED ESTIMATES (MT)			
	SKJ	YFT	BET	TOTAL
2019	39.6	21.1	0.0	60.6
2020	27.5	22.6	0.0	50.1
2021	18.3	30.6	1.7	50.6
2022	47.8	33.2	9.0	90
2023	24.9	24.5	0.6	50

### Coastal state reporting

Since 2012, Tokelau has been participating in the PNA purse seine vessel day scheme (PS VDS) established under the Parties to the Palau Arrangement. The Tokelau EEZ limit for the purse seine fishery is 1,000 fishing days.

In 2016, Tokelau also became a participant in the PNA longline (LL) VDS and was allocated a total of 5,000 fishing days. In 2017 it commenced selling her LL fishing days under this vessel day scheme.

Offshore commercial fishing is undertaken by foreign fishing vessels of distant water fishing nations and neighbouring Pacific Island States. A total of 47 vessels were licenced to fish in Tokelau during 2023 (Table 2).

Longline fishing activity in the Tokelau EEZ has been variable over recent years (Fig 2). In some years catches were almost negligible, although in the most recent five years, between 500 and almost 3,000mt of the three main tuna species have been caught. Vessels flagged to Cook Islands and Vanuatu have accounted for most of this catch. The most important species in the catch is albacore, with moderate catches of yellowfin and bigeye also taken (Fig 2; bottom panel).

Purse seine fishing in Tokelau has been highly variable since 1990 (Figure 1b and Figure 3), although relatively consistent values of about 500-1000 days have been fished since 2011. Although effort in the last 4 years has been somewhat lower, probably due to the extend period of La Nina conditions. Vessels flagged to the US, Korea and Kiribati account for the vast majority (>80%) of fishing effort in the last 5 years. Very similar results are observed for annual catches (Fig 3; bottom panel), with catches in the last decade ranging between about 4,000mt and 45,000mt.

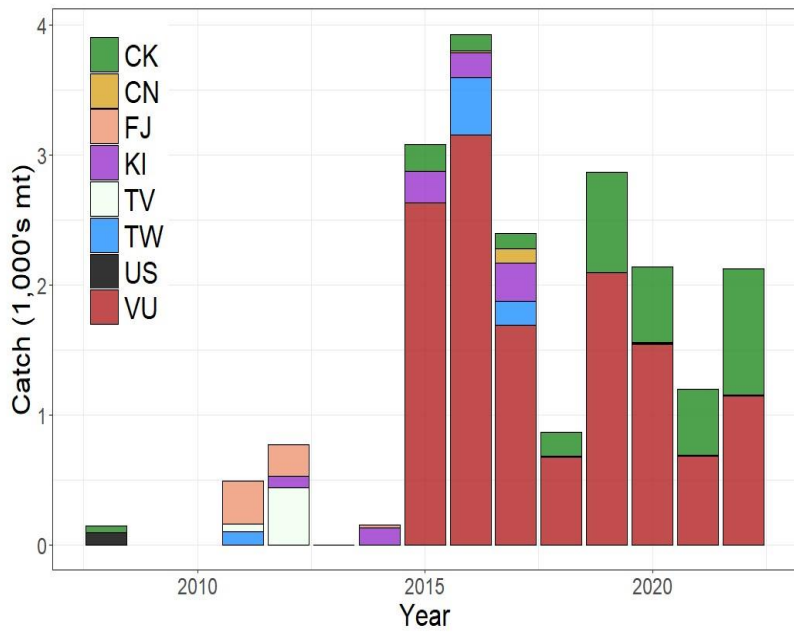
Figure 3 shows the distribution of catch, and its species composition within the EEZ and in the buffer area immediately adjacent. This shows that catch is highest in the northern parts of the EEZ, and this pattern was consistent over the period 2010-20 (top panel) and in the recent period (2021-22; bottom panel). The proportion of bigeye and yellowfin in the catch in most spatial cells in 2021-22 was consistent with the longer period of 2010-20 (top vs bottom panels).

**Table 2:** Number of bilateral licences issued in 2023.

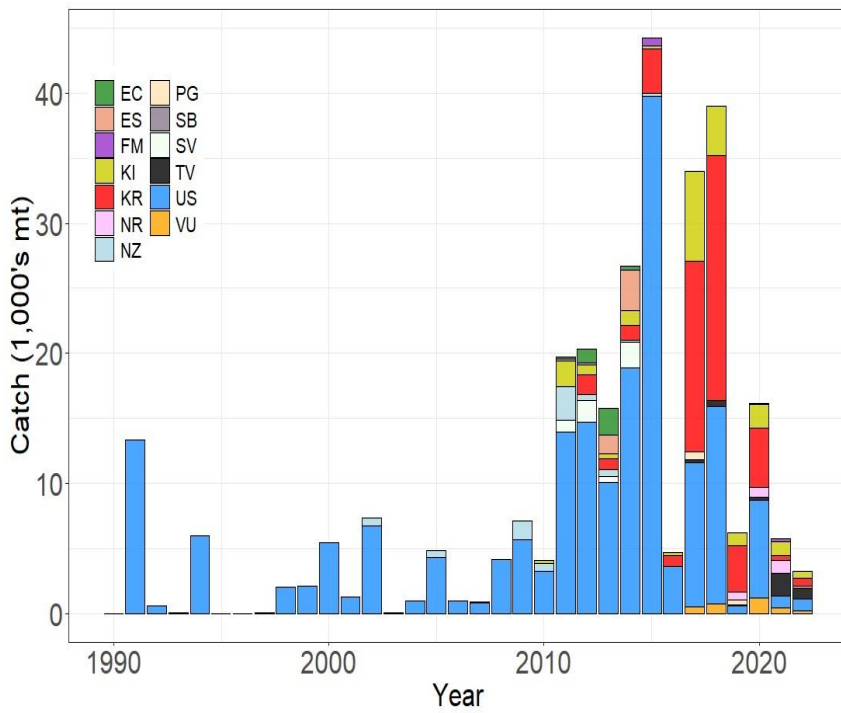
FLAG	PURSE SEINE	LOGLINE
Spain	2	0
Kiribati	3	0
Korea	22	0
Philippines	5	0
Tuvalu	1	0
Vanuatu	2	11
Taiwan	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>11</b>

**Table 3:** Annual catches in Tokelau EEZ from 2019 to 2023. (Source: unraised logsheet data)

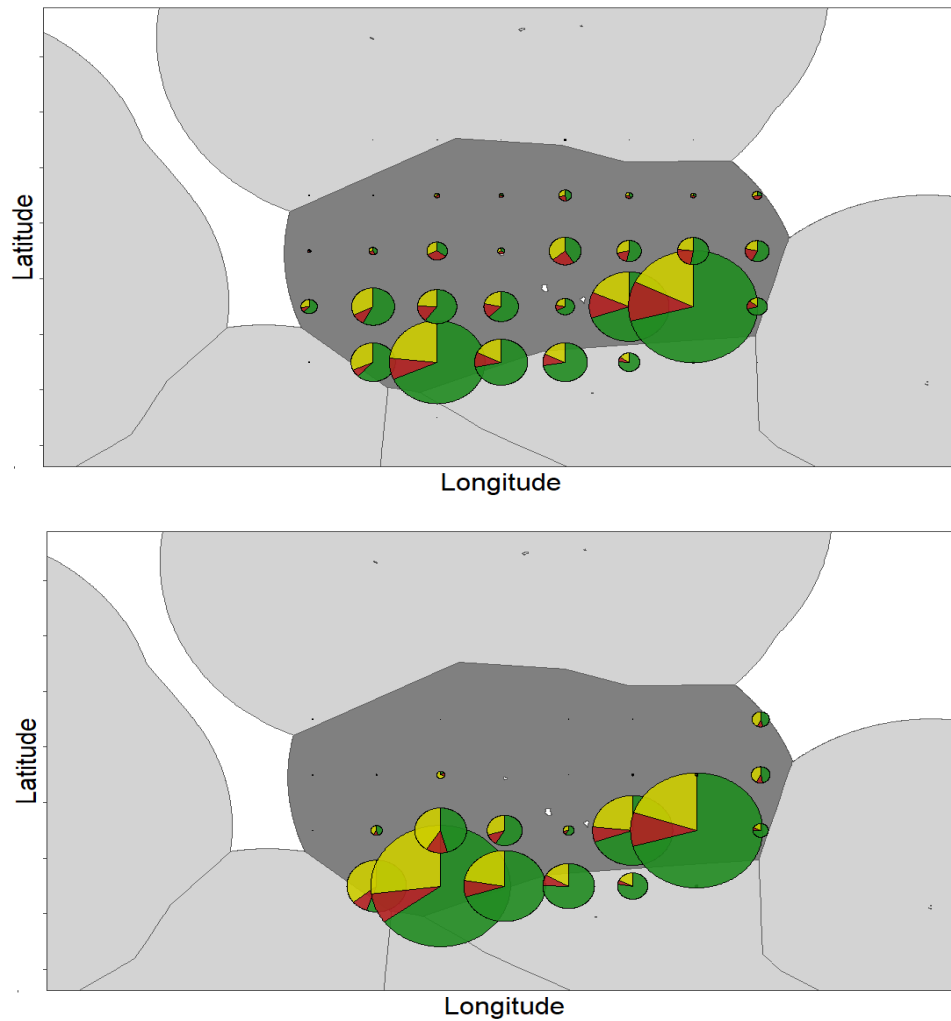
CATCH (MT)								
Year	Gear	Effort (days)	ALB	BET	SKJ	YFT	OTH	TOTAL
2019	Longline	1,727	1,387	126	0	318	289	2,120
	Purse Seine	143	0	28	3,749	125	3	3,904
2020	Longline	2,983	1,218	166	0	585	326	2,295
	Purse Seine	392	0	107	14,492	501	8	15,109
2021	Long Line	1,029	360.56	78.24	0	289.68	104.29	832.77
	Purse Seine	151.16	0	76	5254.1	370	3.92	5,704.02
2022	Long Line	1302	968.25	109.04	24.36	232.13	1	1,333.82
	Purse Seine	78	0	50.1	2,404.2	211.1	3.02	2,668.42
2023	Longline	939	746.09	95.87	0	206.34	82.23	1130.53
	Purse Seine	101	0	24	3230.7	195	1.2	3450.9



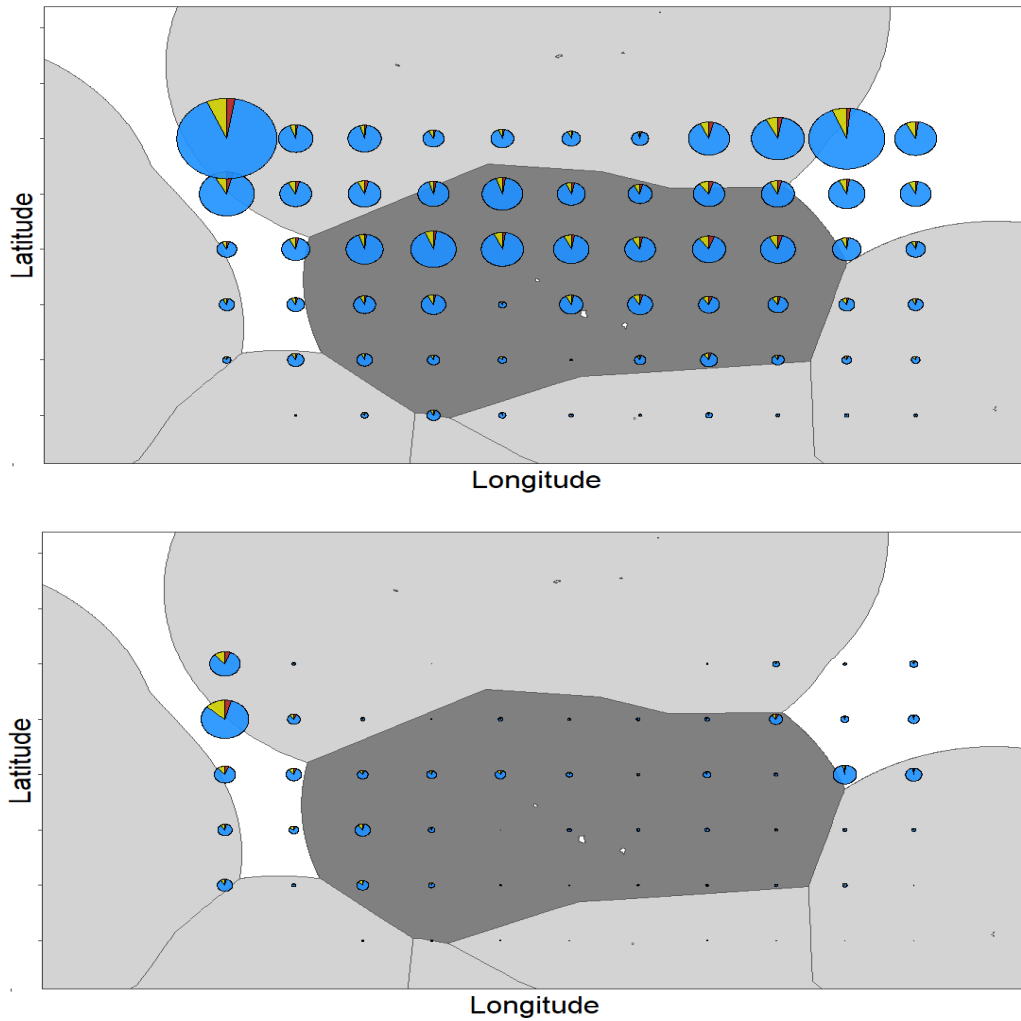
**Figure 1a:** Annual catch of tuna by longline vessels in the Tokelau EEZ, by flag.



**Figure 1b:** Annual catch of tuna by purse seine vessels in the Tokelau EEZ, by flag.



**Figure 2:** Catch of the three main tuna species (green = albacore, red = bigeye, yellow = yellowfin, blue = other) by longline vessels fishing in the Tokelau EEZ, in each 1x1 degree cell in the EEZ and the immediate surrounding area, over the period 2010-20 (top panel) and 2021-22 (bottom panel). The size of the bubble indicates the catch in that cell relative to the other cells in that figure.



**Figure 3:** Catch of the three main tuna species (blue = skipjack, red = bigeye, yellow = yellowfin) by purse seine vessels fishing in the Tokelau EEZ, in each 1x1 degree cell in the EEZ and the immediate surrounding area, over the period 2010-20 (top panel) and 2021-22 (bottom panel). The size of the bubble indicates the catch in that cell relative to the other cells in that figure.

## RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

### TUFMAN 2 – ARTISANAL FISHERIES COMPONENT

The tuna research and statistical needs of Tokelau are largely met by the assistance and support of SPCs’ Oceanic Fisheries Programme. Part of this assistance is the implementation of



the Tuna Management System TUFMAN, now upgraded to TUFMAN 2, in Tokelau. It is now fully functional with ongoing assistance with training as new systems are developed. This initiative will empower the Fisheries Management Agency with a tool to help provide advice to local government and to help fulfil obligations and commitments to the Commission and other regional organizations. Whilst TUFMAN 2 manages the commercial data (offshore fisheries) TUF-ART has been implemented for managing the artisanal fishery (inshore fisheries). The new artisanal fisheries component of TUFMAN 2 was introduced to Tokelau fisheries officers in late 2016. One of the major improvements to the data system was the update to TAILS software in 2018.

## **Monitoring**

All foreign fishing vessels that are licensed to fish in Tokelau waters are required to carry an FFA approved Automatic Location Communicator (ALC) or Mobile Transceiver (MTU) and whilst within Tokelau waters, they are monitored by the FFA installed Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS). This is a critical part of MCS and a workstation was installed in Tokelau in 2005. Tokelau aims to strengthen MCS capabilities through participation in regional and sub-regional strategies and through regional infrastructures. Due to limited resources available, Tokelau must participate in regional and sub-regional collaborations to combat IUU in the Tokelau EEZ.

As a participant in the PNA VDS established under the Palau Arrangement, Tokelau is now implementing the VDS for all their purse seine fisheries and the longline fisheries and all vessels licensed to fish against Tokelau's vessel days within its EEZ are also monitored through the PNA VDS systems.

Tokelau appreciates the value of an Observer Programme and will consider appropriate collaborative effort in the region. Required observer services are provided through other FFA members' country observer programmes and the PNA Observer Programme. Tokelau has no port and wharfage infrastructure so there is no Port Sampling Programme and no port sampling is carried out in Tokelau.

Tokelau is committed to working cooperatively with respect to monitoring and enforcement, and the sharing of MCS assets and information with her counterparts to strengthen the MCS arrangements for Tokelau's EEZ.

Surface and air patrols/surveillance of Tokelau's EEZ are undertaken by New Zealand and FFA coordinated patrols, with input and assistance from the Tokelau Fisheries Management Agency.

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**ADDENDUM TO ANNUAL REPORT PART 1**

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8 April 2024<sup>1</sup>

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

<p><a href="#">CMM 2009-03</a> [Swordfish], Para 8</p>	<p>* N/A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tokelau is not a flag state.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not authorize vessels to fish on the High Seas.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not charter Foreign Fishing Vessels.</li> <li>• The Tokelau EEZ is geographically situated between approximately 6 and 11 degrees South of latitude and between 167 and 176 degrees West of longitude, and is therefore outside of the area of application.</li> </ul> <p>Tokelau does not have a domestic commercial fishing industry.</p>
<p>Observer coverage (<a href="#">WCPFC 11 decision – para 484(b)</a> )</p>	<p>* N/A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tokelau is not a flag state.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not authorize vessels to fish on the High Seas.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not charter Foreign Fishing Vessels.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not have a domestic commercial fishing industry.</li> </ul> <p>** <i>Tokelau does not have a National Observer Programme</i></p>

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<sup>1</sup> Reporting requirements requested by CMMs and decisions of the Commission, as of WCPFC20 (Dec 2023). First issued on 8 April 2024. Changes made from Addendum for 2022 include the revised CMM 2023-03 for North Pacific Swordfish and **WCPFC20 Agreed Audit Points**.

[CMM 2009-06](#)  
[Transshipment],  
Para 11 (ANNEX II)

\* N/A

- Tokelau is not a flag state.
- Tokelau does not authorize vessels to fish on the High Seas.
- Tokelau does not charter Foreign Fishing Vessels.
- Tokelau has no ports and is therefore not a Port State.
- While transshipment is permitted by law in certain circumstances, as a matter of policy, Tokelau does not currently allow transshipments to occur in her EEZ, Territorial Seas or Internal Waters.

**\*\* Tokelau did not approve nor authorize any transshipment activity**

<p><a href="#">CMM 2009-06</a> [Transshipment], Para 11 (ANNEX II)</p>	<p>* N/A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tokelau is not a flag state.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not authorize vessels to fish on the High Seas.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not charter Foreign Fishing Vessels.</li> <li>• Tokelau has no ports and is therefore not a Port State.</li> <li>• While transshipment is permitted by law in certain circumstances, as a matter of policy, Tokelau does not currently allow transshipments to occur in her EEZ, Territorial Seas or Internal Waters.</li> </ul> <p><b>** Tokelau did not approve nor authorize any transshipment activity</b></p>
<p><a href="#">CMM 2011-03</a> [Impact of PS fishing on cetaceans], Para 5</p>	<p>* N/A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tokelau is not a flag state.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not authorize vessels to fish on the High Seas.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not charter Foreign Fishing Vessels.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not have a domestic commercial fishing industry.</li> </ul> <p><b>** No interactions with cetaceans were reported to or by Tokelau in 2023</b></p>
<p><a href="#">CMM 2018-03</a> [Seabirds] Para 13</p>	<p>* N/A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tokelau is not a flag state.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not authorize vessels to fish on the High Seas.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not charter Foreign Fishing Vessels.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not have a domestic commercial fishing industry.</li> </ul> <p><b>** No interactions with Seabirds were reported to or by Tokelau in 2023.</b></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, summarising 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°S<sup>1</sup>]. 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 <sup>2</sup>
[year]						
[year]						
[year]						
[previous year e.g. 2017]						
[current year e.g. 2018]						

1 Insert 'North of 23oN', 'South of 30oS', '25oS-30oS' or '23oN – 250oS'. 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 types<sup>1</sup> used by the fleet in [year].**

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

Totals (must equal 100%)						
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<sup>1</sup>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]					
<b>Total</b>					

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

<p><a href="#">CMM 2006-04</a> [South West striped Marlin], Para 4</p>	<p>* N/A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tokelau is not a flag state.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not authorize vessels to fish on the High Seas.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not charter Foreign Fishing Vessels.</li> <li>• The Tokelau EEZ is geographically situated between approximately 6 and 11 degrees South of latitude and between 167 and 176 degrees West of longitude, and is therefore outside of the area of application.</li> </ul> <p>Tokelau does not have a domestic commercial fishing industry.</p>
<p><a href="#">CMM 2015-02</a> [South Pacific Albacore] Para 4</p>	<p>* N/A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tokelau is not a flag state.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not authorize vessels to fish on the High Seas.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not charter Foreign Fishing Vessels.</li> <li>• The Tokelau EEZ is geographically situated between approximately 6 and 11 degrees South of latitude and between 167 and 176 degrees West of longitude, and is therefore outside of the area of application.</li> </ul> <p>Tokelau does not have a domestic commercial fishing industry.</p>
<p><a href="#">CMM 2019-03</a> [North Pacific Albacore], Para 3</p>	<p>* N/A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tokelau is not a flag state.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not authorize vessels to fish on the High Seas.</li> <li>• Tokelau does not charter Foreign Fishing Vessels.</li> <li>• The Tokelau EEZ is geographically situated between approximately 6 and 11 degrees South of latitude and between 167 and 176 degrees West of longitude, and is therefore outside of the area of application.</li> </ul> <p>Tokelau does not have a domestic commercial fishing industry.</p>

<p><b><u>CMM 2023-03</u> [North Pacific Swordfish], para 4</b></p>	<p>* N/A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tokelau is not a flag state.</li><li>• Tokelau does not authorize vessels to fish on the High Seas.</li><li>• Tokelau does not charter Foreign Fishing Vessels.</li><li>• The Tokelau EEZ is geographically situated between approximately 6 and 11 degrees South of latitude and between 167 and 176 degrees West of longitude, and is therefore outside of the area of application.</li></ul> <p>Tokelau does not have a domestic commercial fishing industry.</p>
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## **Tokelau Contextual Statement**

*The following points should be taken into account when considering Tokelau's completion of her AR Prt1 & AR Prt2 Reporting Template. Tokelau will refer to these points by their number when responding to fields in the template.*

1. Tokelau is a small island developing territory (administered by New Zealand).
2. Tokelau consists of three atolls with a population of 1400 people. The Tokelau EEZ is geographically situated between approximately 6 degrees and 11degrees South of latitude and between 167 and 176 degrees West of longitude
3. New Zealand signed UNCLOS on behalf of Tokelau and therefore New Zealand is responsible at international law for the Tokelau EEZ. Some of the administrative functions relating to the management of the Tokelau EEZ have been delegated by New Zealand to the government of Tokelau.
4. Tokelau is a participating territory in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.
5. Tokelau is not a flag state. Tokelau does not authorize vessel to fish on the High Seas. Tokelau does not charter Foreign Fishing Vessels.
6. Tokelau has no ports and is therefore not a Port State.
7. While transshipments in the EEZ is permitted by law in certain circumstances, as a matter of policy Tokelau does not currently allow transshipments to occur in its EEZ, Territorial Sea or Internal Waters.
8. Tokelau has very limited fisheries scientific, management or MCS capability. However New Zealand, FFA, SPC, TVM and PNAO provide fisheries services to support Tokelau meet its fisheries obligations.
9. Tokelau does not have a domestic commercial fishing industry.
10. The fisheries of the Tokelau EEZ are managed by way of an Offshore Fisheries Management Plan that sets tonnage zone limits for each of the tuna species supported by numerical limits on purse seine and long line licenses. On the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2013 the management of the Tokelau purse seine fishery has been managed by way of the Vessel Day Scheme established under the Palau Arrangement.

*Tokelau has a very small artisanal fishery that is carried out within its 12 nautical mile Territorial Sea and Internal Waters. This artisanal fishery is managed by the elders of each atoll with the primary objective of maintaining the food security and cultural wellbeing of each of the 3 island communities.*