



**Western and
Central Pacific
Fisheries
Commission**

**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
TWENTIETH REGULAR SESSION**

Manila, Philippines
14 – 21 August 2024

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

WCPFC-SC20-AR/CCM-33

EL SALVADOR

EL SALVADOR, WESTERN AND CENTRAL PACIFIC FISHERIES COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT PART 1: FISHERIES RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

2023 PERIOD (01 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2023)

JULY 14, 2024

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 2023	YES
If no, please indicate the reason(s) and intended actions:	

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1. SUMMARY

El Salvador is located in Central America, it started tuna activities in 2001 as a member of the Inter American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), the activities in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission started in 2001, ceased in 2003 and started again in 2007.

El Salvador were granted the status of Cooperating Non Member at the 5th Regular Session of the Commission held in Busan, Republic of Korea in 2008 and the status has been renewed year by year since; as the country comply with the Commission and the applicable Conservation and Management Measures (CMM) and pay the financial contribution to the Commission as CNM.

El Salvador fishing history in the Pacific Ocean for tuna and associated species goes back to 2001, it started with two purse seiners (Montelucia and Monterocio, the later formerly known as Alexandros). Regarding the fishing activities, El Salvador is a Cooperating Member of the IATTC, conducting fishing activities on the area of the convention, that for, choosing to implement IATTC measures and limit calculation on the overlap area, and covering all of the fishing activities through the endorsed Observer Program.

The target species for Salvadoran flagged vessels in the WCPFC area are tropical tunas, particularly Yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), Skipjack tuna (*Katsowonus pelamis*) and Bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*).

The information gathered for the preparation of this report comes from logbooks, VMS tracking, catch certificates, observer reports, landing reports, inspection reports and data requested to both WCPFC trough the Pacific Community (SPC) and the IATTC.

2. TABULAR ANNUAL FISHERIES INFORMATION

Table 1. Shows annual catches and effort for El Salvador's fleet in the WCPFC Convention Area from 2019 – 2023; data comes primarily from captain logbooks.

Table 1. Annual catches and effort for primary species and year for El Salvador fleet in WCPFC Area.

YEAR	ANNUAL CATCHES BY PRIMARY SPECIES (MT)				FISHING DAYS
	YFT	SKJ	BET	TOTAL	HIGH SEAS
2019	111	1003	451	1565	6
2020	363	2541	732	3636	29
2021	609	3010	1424	5040	28
2022	412	2183	1275	3870	27
2023	210	3251	442	3903	24

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For annual catches estimates the data gathered comes primarily from captain's logbook, which is filled by the captain of the vessel (Figure 1).

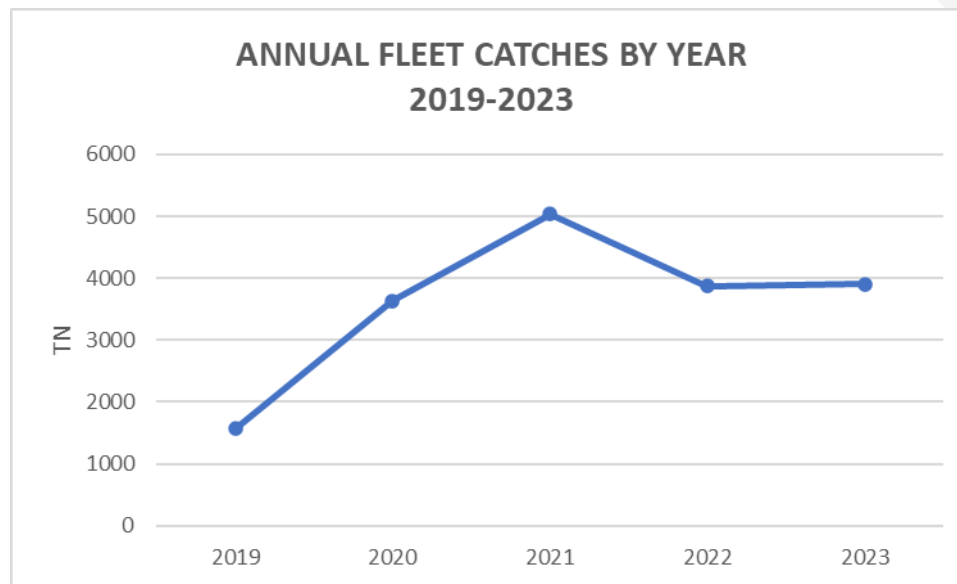


Figure 1. Historical catch in the WCPFC Convention Area by El Salvador's fleet (data gathered from captain's logbook).

3. BACKGROUND

El Salvador is a country in Central America, with approximately 320 km of coastline bordering the North Pacific Ocean, between Guatemala and Honduras; and between the 13°10' N and 13°40' N.

Fishing and aquaculture is regulated and promoted by the General Law to Manage and Promote Fisheries and Aquaculture, published on the official Gazette number 240, volume number 353, December 19th, 2001. This law is executed by the Center for Fisheries and Aquaculture Development of the Republic of El Salvador (CENDEPESCA) which is a branch of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG).

El Salvador fishing activities in the WCPFC Convention Area started in 2001, with two Salvadoran flagged purse seiners operating in the Area of the Convention (Montelucia and Monterocio formerly known as Alexandros).

Salvadoran fleet in the WCPFC Convention Area has been constituted by purse seiners only, target species of interest for Salvadoran fleet are limited to tropical tunas, fishing activities has been generally conducted between the 20° N and 15° S.

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Currently El Salvador has a Cooperating Non – Member Status granted by the Commission on WCPFC16; Commission agreed participatory rights for El Salvador in 29 fishing days in the high seas (same as previous year). El Salvador is complying with all the measures issued by the Commission to aim sustainable fisheries under the technical standards established by the Commission; which include but is not limited to comply with all the Conservation Management Measures and Resolutions, capacity control and catch limits, observers’ program, High Seas Inspection Programs and Vessel Monitoring System (VMS).

4. FLAG STATE REPORTING

Activities conducted by Salvadoran fleet in the 2023 period was made with two of the vessels that are authorized on the WCPFC RFV (Montelucia and Monterocio); data provided to the Commission has been gathered from the logbooks reported to CENDEPESCA by the Salvadoran tuna industry. The Number of fishing vessels conducting activities in the WCPFC Area may vary from year to year, as previously stated El Salvador is Member of the IATTC and WCPFC CNM, by maintaining these status, Salvadoran vessels might come forward and back in-between Convention areas, always complying with the respective measures established by each of the Commissions.

Figure 2 show Salvadoran flagged vessels that has been historically active in the WCPFC Convention Area from the 2019 period to 2023.

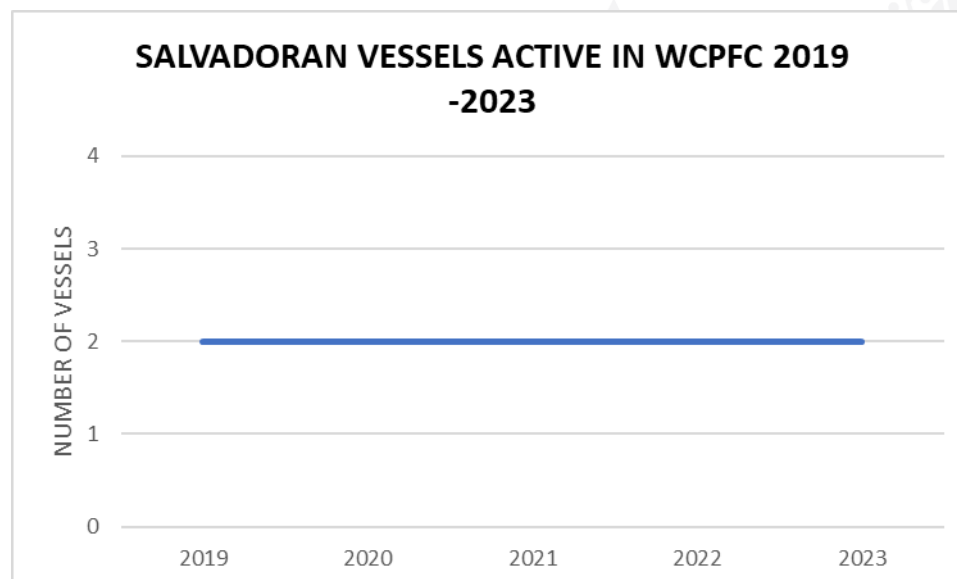


Figure 2. Historical annual vessel numbers for El Salvador fleet fishing in WCPFC Convention Area.

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El Salvador started activities in WCPFC Area in 2007; Salvadoran vessels number has kept the same, all Salvadoran flagged vessels operating in the Convention has been on the WCPFC RFV for their respective period of activity. Table 2 shows the number of vessels by gear and size category.

Table 2. Number of Salvadoran vessels, by gear and size category, active in the WCPFC Convention Area from 2019 to 2023.

YEAR	NUMBER OF VESSELS	GEAR TYPE	SIZE CATEGORY
2019	2	PURSE SEINE	1500+
2020	2	PURSE SEINE	1500+
2021	2	PURSE SEINE	1500+
2022	2	PURSE SEINE	1500+
2023	2	PURSE SEINE	1500+

Regarding geographical Area of sets performed in the 2023 period; this information was included in digital form to the SPC in the submit of scientific data, which also contains copy of the original captain logbook for each conducted trip on the WCPFC Convention Area.

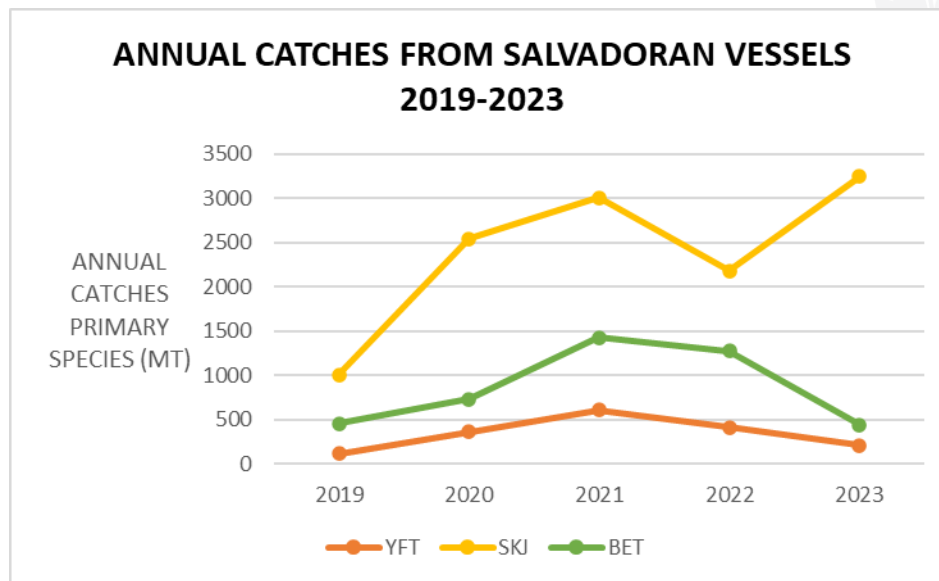


Figure 3. Annual distribution of target species catches from 2018 - 2023

Figure 3 shows the annual distribution for target species catch for the Salvadoran flagged fleet from 2019 to 2023 in the WCPFC Convention Area, in general; similar trending regarding fishing effort in EEZ started in 2017

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(prior 2016 more effort was conducted by salvadoran fleet in WCPFC EEZ's) and has continued to be similar trough 2019 to 2023, having a significant reduction of the production in the 2019 period.

Regarding bycatch, as previously stated, El Salvador flagged vessels are encouraged to not discard any captured species while on sea, only at landing, so quantities in observer reports are as accurate as possible. As for now El Salvador has no capacity to conduct an observer program, data gathered for the bycatch of species comes primarily from logbooks and the IATTC endorsed Observer Program.

Due to reduced fishing effort on 2019, bycatch quantities and species reflected a reduction that year, quantities increased in 2020 and subsequently for 2021 and 2022, this period bycatch quantities stayed very similar to previous period.

Table 3. Annual estimated catches of non - target species by Salvadoran flagged vessels from 2020-2023.

CIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	2020	2021	2022	2023*
<i>Acanthocybium solandri</i>	Wahoo	0.53	0.47	0.376	0.2
<i>Canthidermis maculata</i>	Ocean triggerfish	0.04		0.386	
<i>Carcharhinidae</i>	Requiem sharks, nei	0.56			
<i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i>	Silky shark	1.73	15.016	12.19	1.2
<i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i>	Oceanic whitetip shark	0.03	0.045	0.126	0.03
<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>	Dolphinfish	0.04	1.415	1.587	
<i>Elagatis bipinnulata</i>	Rainbow runner	0.06	0.135	0.531	
<i>Istiophoridae</i>	Marlin, nei	0.43		1.195	
<i>Kajikia audax</i>	Striped marlin				
<i>Makaira indica</i>	Black marlin	0.07			
<i>Sphyrnidae</i>	Barracuda			0.001	
<i>Sphyrna spp</i>	Hammer head shark NEI*			0.166	
<i>Rajiformes</i>			0.025		
TOTAL		3.49	17.106	16.558	1.43

*Data for 2023 has been partially processed due to delays related to data access from observer programs

Table 4. Estimated annual data coverage for collecting data.

VESSEL	OPERATIONAL CATCH EFFORT	OBSERVER ON BOARD	TRANSHIPMENT DATA COVERAGE	LANDING INSPECTIONS
MONTELUCCIA	100%	100%	**	100%
MONTEROCIO	100%	100%	**	100%

** No transshipments occurred in 2023

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El Salvador is not a coastal state of the WCPFC; therefore, does not have a surveillance program to control its fleet operating on the Convention Area, however all the fishing trip conducted on the Convention Area are monitored by the IATTC endorsed Observer Programme and WCPFC Observer Programme. While disembarking on El Salvador, CENDEPESCA performs inspection and control on 100% of disembarks made at port; that includes all the vessels operating on the WCPFC Convention Area.

Legislation provides controls regarding:

1. Landings.
2. RMFO management measures resolutions/recommendations/conservation and management measures.

5. COSTAL STATE REPORTING

El Salvador is not a coastal state of the WCPFC Area and does not conduct tuna directed fishing activities in jurisdictional waters, interaction with tuna vessels (national and foreign) are limited to landings and vessels maintaining. El Salvador only has a trawler fleet of 55 vessels that target shrimp species in jurisdictional waters that conduct activities near the coast (from 3 to 8 nm).

6. SOCIO ECONOMIC FACTORS

Tuna industry in El Salvador directly employs around 1500 people in processing activities in plant, 500 people employed in offloading activities of the vessels, 175 as crew members of the vessels and indirectly employs 5000 people in different activities exclusively. This numbers comes from national statistical information gathered for IATTC, WCPFC and ICCAT.

7. DISPOSAL OF CATCH

Tuna is processed and canned in a processing plant located in eastern El Salvador. Discarded tuna due to contaminants and waste are processed for fish meal. Tuna loins are exported to European Union markets while canned tuna is distributed all over the world including national market using different brands depending of the demographic area.

8. ONSHORE DEVELOPMENTS

As stated above, El Salvador only has one tuna processing plant located in eastern El Salvador that comply with all the requirements established by Salvadoran laws.

Regarding supporting facilities; El Salvador counts with a port designated for fishing landings; CORSAIN port located in La Union, and has one shipyard, designated for reparations of industrial vessels that includes fishing vessels; CEPA port at Acajutla, Sonsonate, which offer a variety of services of vessel maintenance.

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9. FUTURE PROSPECT OF THE FISHERY

El Salvador tuna fleet is composed by seventh purse seiners operating in the Pacific and Atlantic, but El Salvador has no plans on increasing the number of vessels operating in the WCPFC Convention Area, only three purse seiners are currently operating in the Pacific Ocean and only two are authorized by El Salvador to fish on the WCPFC Area. El Salvador as previously stated is a Member of the IATTC and contracting party of the ICCAT.

10. STATUS OF TUNA FISHERY DATA COLLECTION SYSTEMS

- a) **Logsheet data collection and verification:** All logsheet data from tuna vessels received at port is physically and digitally archived on the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Department, at the Center for Fisheries and Aquaculture Development of the Republic of El Salvador (CENDEPESCA).
- b) **Observer Programme:** El Salvador does not have an Observer Programme, therefore the activity in the WCPFC Convention Area the IATTC endorsed Observer Program and WCPFC Observer Program is hired.
- c) **Port Sampling Programme:** Tuna industry is requested to provide sampling of the landings as part of the inspection at port, in addition inspection at processing plant include the take of sampling when required.
- d) **Unloading/Transshipment:** Salvadoran tuna vessels are not authorized to transship at high sea, only at port. When transshipment occurs at foreign ports, tuna industry is obligated to report in anticipation to the Salvadoran authorities as well to provide copy of the documentation to fulfill obligations with ORP's; this documentation is archived on the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Department, at the Center for Fisheries and Aquaculture Development of the Republic of El Salvador (CENDEPESCA).
- e) **COVID 19 Situation regarding data collection:** Due to COVID19 decisions adopted in the ORP's to guarantee health and security of observer and crew members, some trips did not have WCPFC observer on board, but it was possible to achieve 100% coverage with the IATTC observers, information of the trips, vessel names and observer names on board of Salvadoran vessels that conducted activity on the WCPFC (and IATTC) was provided to SPC along with scientific data submitted before April 30.

11. RESEARCH ACTIVITIES COVERING TARGET AND NON – TARGET SPECIES

El Salvador is a country in development stage; it has no resources to conduct investigation to support stocks assessment, environmental factors, or biomass surveys. Composition of the catch and estimations are assessed during inspections and disembarkation of catches, and this are contrasted with observer reports and catches reported by captains in the logbooks.

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ADDENDUM TO ANNUAL REPORT PART 1

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

CMM 2009-03 [Swordfish], Para 8	Salvadoran vessels don't fish swordfish in the area south of 20° S, the main area where Salvadoran fleet conduct activities is in-between 20° N and 15° S.
Observer coverage (WCPFC 11 decision – para 484(b))	El Salvador does not have longline vessels operating on the WCPFC Convention Area.
CMM 2009-06 [Transshipment], Para 11 (ANNEX II)	There were no transshipments made by Salvadoran vessels in the 2023 period.
CMM 2011-03 [Impact of PS fishing on cetaceans], Para 5	There are no reports regarding interactions with cetaceans for the 2023 period up to this date. Salvadoran vessels do not perform sets on cetaceans, preferred method is set on of FAD's
CMM 2018-03 [Seabirds] Para 13	El Salvador does not have longline vessels operating in the WCPFC Convention Area; and did not report any interaction with seabird for operations conducted by purse seine vessels on the 2023 period.

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

CMM 2006-04 [South West striped Marlin], Para 4	Salvadoran vessels don't fish striped marlin in the area south of 15° S, the main area where Salvadoran fleet conduct activities is in-between 20° N and 15° S
CMM 2015-02 [South Pacific Albacore] Para 4	El Salvador does not fish South Pacific Albacore as target species. Salvadoran vessels do not conduct fishing activities south of 20° S.

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<p>CMM 2019-03 [North Pacific Albacore], Para 3</p>	<p>Salvadoran vessels don't fish North Pacific Albacore, target species are tropical tuna only; specifically Yellowfin tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>), Skipjack tuna (<i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i>) and Bigeye tuna (<i>Thunnus obesus</i>).</p>
<p>CMM 2022-02 [North Pacific Swordfish], Para 4</p>	<p>Salvadoran vessels don't fish North Pacific swordfish, target species are tropical tuna only, specifically Yellowfin tuna (<i>Thunnus albacares</i>), Skipjack tuna (<i>Katsuwonus pelamis</i>) and Bigeye tuna (<i>Thunnus obesus</i>).</p>

IMPORTANT DATA GAP STATEMENT

El Salvador as state flag; does not have access to information gathered by WCPFC Observer Programs when hired; processed data from those Observer Programs is not updated on time on the SPC statistical platform (DORADO) before submission of Annual Reports part 1 and 2; which is the tool that the authority uses to update data gathered by observers, this creates an important gap on the information that can be collected and sent to the Commission year by year, therefore; for some data and information El Salvador has to rely mostly on IATTC endorsed Observer Program, in order to cover WCPFC requirements. El Salvador is looking forward to find mechanics that can help to obtain this data, so more accurate provision of data can be made to comply with commission most high standards.

In addition, for the current period on revision COVID19 was still an obstacle for El Salvador in regards of fishing operation (similar than previous year), verification of the same and subsequently the completion of data in regards of observer coverage, due to the unprecedented circumstances some information compiled for Annual Report Part 1 and Part 2 took longer time than before to be processed.