



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE  
TWENTIETH REGULAR SESSION**

Manila, Philippines  
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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-26 (Rev.01)**

**31 July 2024**

**TUVALU**



**TUVALU FISHERIES DEPARTMENT**  
**MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**DEVELOPMENT**  
**GOVERNMENT OF TUVALU**



**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE WESTERN 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 the 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2024.	YES
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## 1.0 ABSTRACT

Tuna catches in Tuvalu's EEZ are caught mostly by Purse seine and Longline fishing methods. The Tuvalu Fisheries Department continues to manage and monitor all the fishing activities in Tuvalu EEZ. These fishing activities are mostly carried out by our bilateral partners under access agreements and regional arrangements under the FSMA and US Treaty.

The Tuvalu catch estimated for the period of 2023 through our flagged vessels is increasing compared to the previous year. The total catch estimated for 2023 PS is about 47,462 mt. The highest catch was recorded for Skipjack species, accounting for about 33,461mt (71%), Yellowfin tuna species was recorded with a catch of 13,312mt (28%), while the Bigeye tuna species has the lowest catch estimated at 689mt (less than 1%).

The Fisheries department issued a total of 149 fishing licenses for the year 2023, under the category of bilateral agreements. Purse Seine has been the dominant gear type as in the previous three years. The 149 licenses are not including Purse seine fishing vessels licensed under the FSM Arrangement, and US Treaty. Bilateral arrangements covered 95 Purse seine vessels, the FSM Arrangement registered 86 vessels and 12 vessels were registered under the US Treaty.

The Purse Seine Catches of tuna species in Tuvalu's EEZ for 2023 were caught mostly by vessels operating under our bilateral and regional arrangements. By Species, Skipjack tuna has dominated the catch taken inside Tuvalu EEZ. By registration Kiribati Flag vessels took the most catch. By species, Skipjack tuna is estimated to be around 42,284mt, with 892mt of Yellowfin tuna and 409mt of Bigeye tuna were caught by Purse seine fleets inside Tuvalu's EEZ.

The Longline fleet continued to operate within Tuvalu EEZ for the year 2023. Yellowfin Tuna is the dominant species caught within our EEZ with an estimate catch of 221mt. Bigeye tuna was the second most important catch taken within Tuvalu EEZ with an estimate of 114mt. The last of these target tuna species is Albacore tuna, and it's catch is estimated to be around 86mt. There are also other species taken within Tuvalu estimated to be around 47mt. These longline vessels are mostly to be flagged by Fiji and China. Kiribati attributed catches were due to vessels has been chartered by Kiribati.

Tuvalu's observer programme (TVOB) has continued their normal routine of placing observers on Purse seiners (100%) and with plans to place more on Fish carrier. There are 74 active observers. The Fisheries Department were expecting to recruit more observers soon.

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

Tuvalu flagged vessels used only one type of fishing method within the WCPO Convention Area for 2023. There were six purse seiners only, while the Tuvalu Longline vessel that has operated in previous years has already been removed from the WCPFC register. This Tuvalu Longline flag vessel was inactive since February 2022 until it was de-registered in 2023.

All the fishing operations carried out by foreign fishing vessels within the Tuvalu Exclusive Economic Zone are managed and monitored by the Tuvalu Fisheries Department in accordance with their access agreements.

In 2023, the fishing effort and catch for Tuvalu purse seiners were mostly concentrated in the Kiribati EEZ including Phoenix and the Line groups, as well as Tuvalu, Nauru, PNG EEZs and some fishing in the High Seas.

## 3.0 FLAG STATE REPORTING

### 3.1 DOMESTIC FLEET

In 2023 on the WCPFC RFV for Tuvalu, there are 6 Purse-Seiner vessels authorized to fish in the Convention area in 2023. The table 1 below indicates the number of Tuvalu Purse-Seiner vessels and their size categories active in the WCPFC over the past 5 years.

**Table 1: Number of Tuvalu Purse Seiner flagged vessels and size category, active in the WCPFC Convention Area for 2019 - 2023.**

Year	00-500 GRT	501-1000 GRT	1001-1500 GRT	1500+ GRT	Total Vessels
2019	0	0	0	1	1
2020	0	1	0	2	3
2021	0	2	1	3	6
2022	0	2	1	3	6
2023	0	2	1	3	6

### 3.2 CATCH DATA

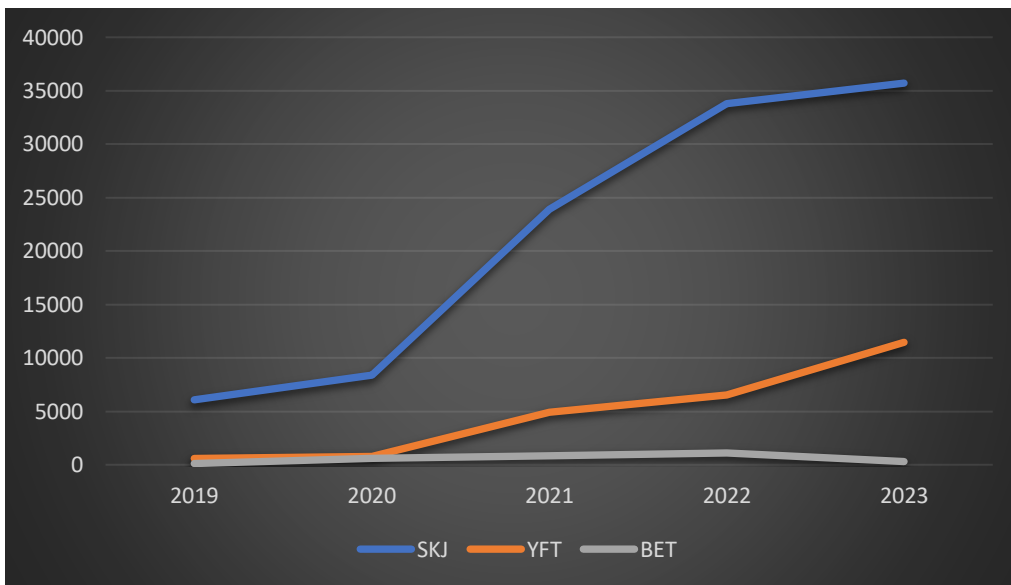
#### 3.2.1 Purse Seine

The Tuvalu catch estimated for the period of 2023 through our flagged vessels is increasing compared to the previous year. The total catch estimated for 2023 PS is about 47,462 mt, as referenced in Table 2 and Figure 1. According to the records of logsheets for our flagged vessels, the highest catch was recorded for Skipjack tuna species, accounting for about 33,461mt (71%). Additionally, Yellowfin tuna species was recorded with a catch of 13,312mt (28%), and Bigeye tuna species had the lowest catch estimated at 689mt (less than 1%).

Table 2: Annual raised catch estimated (mt) for Tuvalu Purse Seiner fleet, in the WCPFC Convention Area over the five past years (2019-2023). Source: TUFMAN 2: ACE

YEAR	SKJ	YFT	BET	Total
2019	6075	587	113	6775
2020	8384	805	614	9803
2021	23898	4931	809	29638
2022	33798	6521	1102	41421
2023	33461	13312	689	47462

Figure 1: Chart of annual catches target species for Tuvalu Purse Seiner for the WCPFC Convention Area over the past five years (2019-2023)

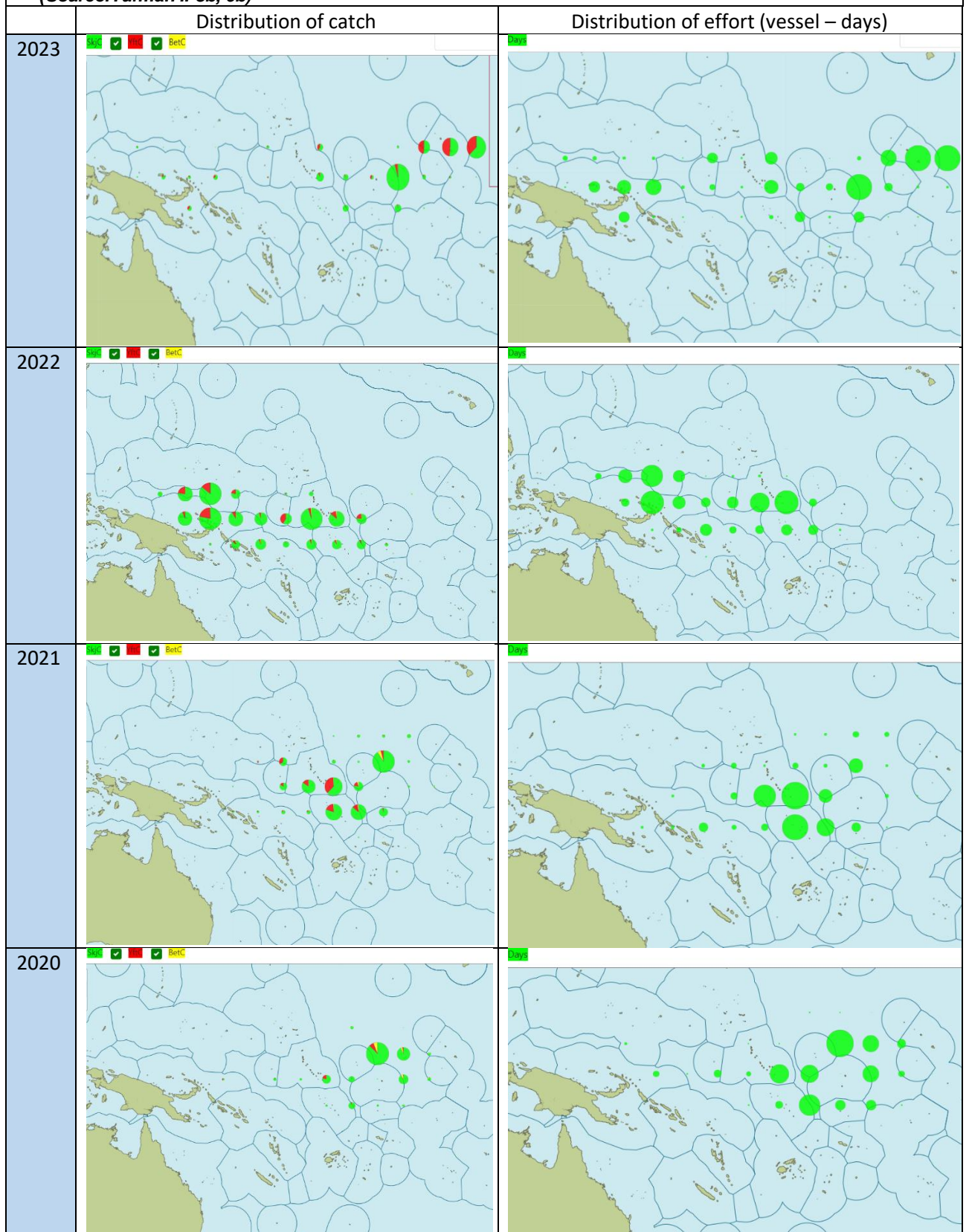


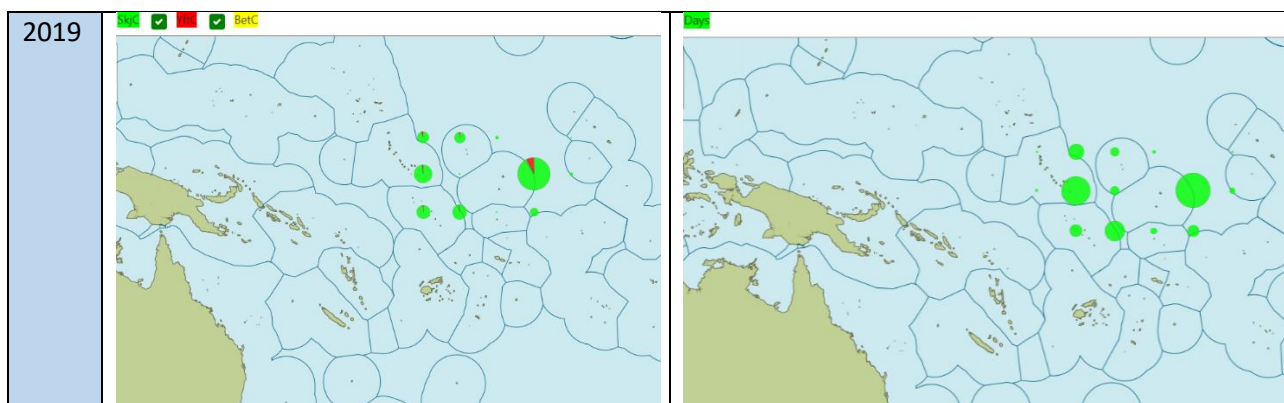
### 3.3 FISHING PATTERN AND DISTRIBUTION

#### 3.3.1 Catch and Effort Distribution for Purse Seiners

In 2023, the fishing effort and catch for purse seine were mostly concentrated in the Kiribati EEZ including Phoenix and the Line groups, fishing also occurred in Tuvalu, Nauru and PNG EEZ and there were some fishing in the High Seas. The most abundant species caught was skipjack tuna (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Tuvalu National Purse Seiner fleet operations within WCPO area in the past 5 years.**  
 (Source: Tufman II-8b, 9b)





### 3.4 ARTISANAL FISHERIES

In the Tuvalu Fisheries Department under the Coastal section, our data on artisanal fisheries are still being collected on the main target species, which are skipjack, bigeye, and yellowfin tuna, by our data collectors in Funafuti and the outer islands. Mainly, these data are being collected from our fishermen using handline and troll fishing, as part of the small-scale artisanal tuna data collection programme. Analysis of creel data shows the highest catch of Skipjack tuna of 3760.72kg (77%) of the total, yellowfin tuna of 1092.6kg (22.5%) and Bigeye tuna of 1.58kg (0.03%). Note that while these figures provide a reasonable estimate of the percentage of catches of each species, they do not give a reliable estimate of total catch, which is estimated at a few hundred tonnes per year.

### 3.5 SPECIES OF SPECIAL INTEREST

There is an observer report on a whale shark interaction from our Tuvalu flagged vessels. It was accidentally caught and released unharmed by opening the net. Other species of special interest are also mentioned in the table below

Species	Sp_code	Vessel name	Catch Date	Number
Common Dolphin	DCO	Queen Ellice	31/05/2023	10
False Killer Whale	FAW	Deolinda	31/03/2023	4
Aquatic Mammals NEI	MAM	Deolinda	22/04/2023	1
SEI Whale	SIW	Taina	09/04/2023	1
Whale Shark	RHN	Elspeth	26/12/2023	1
Whale Shark	RHN	Queen Ellice	17/06/2023	1
Whale Shark	RHN	Queen Ellice	01/07/2023	1

### 3.6 NON-TARGET ASSOCIATED OR DEPENDENT SPECIES

The annual estimates of non-target species caught by our flagged vessels are provided in Table 3. According to Purse Seine data, the total catch of non-target species for the year 2023 was 51 mt.



**Table 3: Annual raised catch estimates (mt) of non-target species, associated or dependent species for PS Tuvalu flagged vessels only.**

YEAR	BLM	BUM	MLS	SWO	BSH	FAL	HAM	MAK	OCS	TOTAL
Purse seine										
2023	13	12	2	0	0	23	0	0	1	51
2022	7	15	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	34
2021	0	3	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	16
2020	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
2019	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
2018	0	7	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	11

## 4.0 COASTAL STATE REPORTING

### 4.1 FISHING LICENSES

In order to success Tuvalu’s EEZ, the vessel operators have to agree to the terms and conditions and also sign an access agreement with the Government of Tuvalu, this is an obligation under our Laws. The Tuvalu government continued to issue licenses via an online system through the PNA Fisheries Management Information System (FIMS), which is accessed by the industry on iFIMS. These fishing permits are issued mostly to bilateral partners in the Philippines, Korea, Taiwan, China, Kiribati and Vanuatu. The Government of Tuvalu continues to grant High seas fishing permits to its flag vessels for the purpose of fishing on areas beyond our national jurisdiction for our National fleet. In addition, vessels operating under multinational accords like the US Treaty and FSM Arrangement can access Tuvalu’s EEZ for the purpose of fishing operation under their regional access licenses.

The Fisheries Department issued a total of 149 fishing licenses for the year 2023, under the category of bilateral agreements, as shown in table 4 and figure 3. Purse Seine has been the dominant gear type throughout the past five years. The 149 licenses recorded in table 6 for the year 2023, do not include fishing vessels licensed under the FSM Arrangement, and US Treaty, which are treated separately in table 5.. Bilateral arrangements covered 95 vessels, the FSM Arrangement licensed 86 vessels and 12 vessels were licensed under the US Treaty.

**Table 4: Number of licenses issued for fishing in Tuvalu’s EEZ, by flag and gear type from 2019 to 2023.**

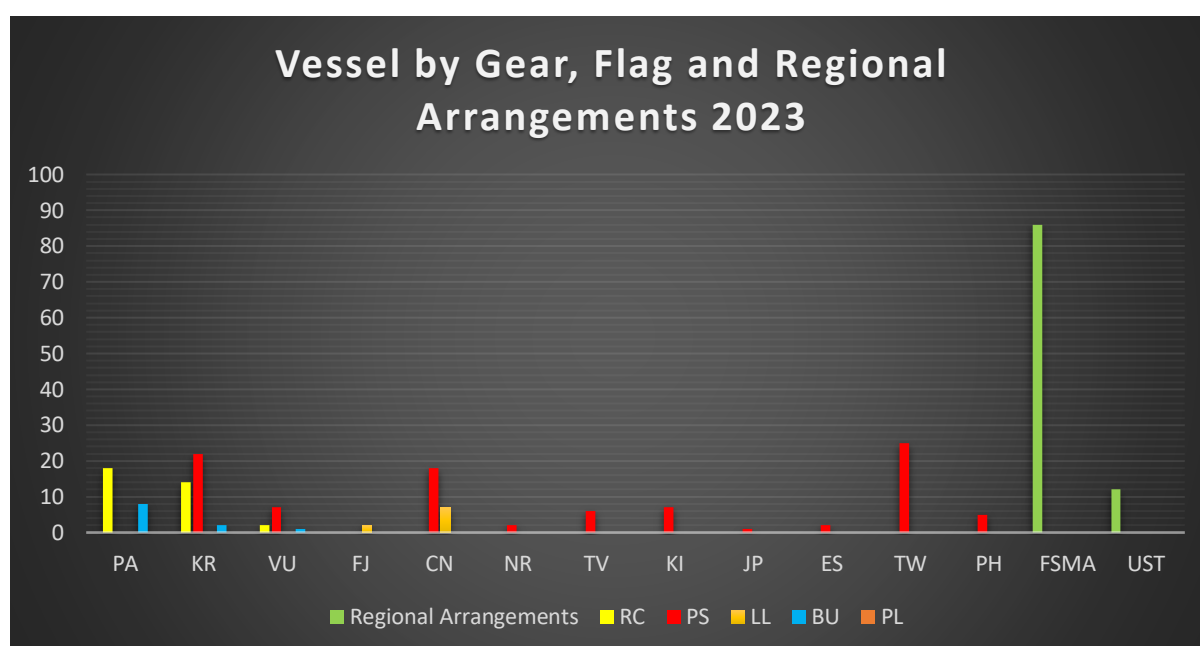
Source: TUFMAN 1 & PNA FIMS.

Years	Longline	Purse seine	Pole & Line	Fish Carrier	Bunker	TOTAL
2019	70	104	14	51	0	239
2020	31	98	16	55	4	204
2021	27	108	12	26	10	183
2022	23	93	1	6	10	133
2023	9	95	0	34	11	149

**Table 5: Numbers of PS bilateral & multilateral licensed vessels authorized to fish in Tuvalu EEZ from 2019 to 2023. Key: FSMA – Federated State of Micronesia Arrangement, UST – US Treaty. Source: PNA FIMS.**

Years	Bilateral	FSMA	UST	TOTAL
2019	104	68	27	199
2020	98	70	25	193
2021	108	83	17	208
2022	93	82	7	182
2023	95	86	12	193

**Figure 3: Annual number of licensed fishing vessels by gear, flag and Regional agreements in 2023.**



#### 4.2 TUNA CATCH IN TUVALU EEZ

Tuvalu Exclusive Economic Zone covers an oceanic area of approximately 749,790 km<sup>2</sup>. The Tuvalu Fisheries Department continues to carefully monitor the inshore and offshore fishery, with assistance from regional organisations in the Pacific region.

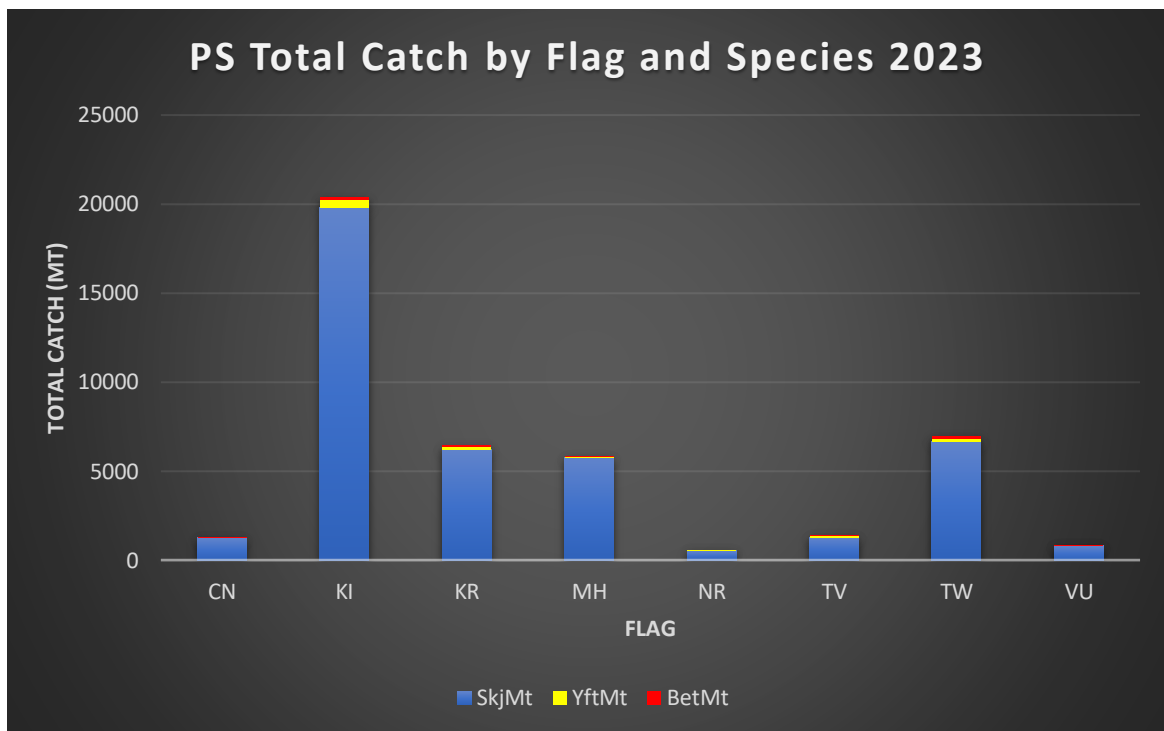
The Purse Seine Catches of tuna species in Tuvalu’s EEZ for 2023 were caught mostly by vessels operating under our bilateral and regional arrangements, with catch by flag shown in figure 4. Skipjack tuna has dominant the highest catch taken inside our EEZ with Kiribati Flag vessels leading the table with the most catch. Skipjack tuna catches are estimated to be around 42,284mt while 892mt of Yellowfin tuna and 409mt of Bigeye tuna caught by the Purse seine fleet inside Tuvalu’s EEZ.

The Longline fleet continued to operate within Tuvalu EEZ for the year 2023, with catches as shown in figure 5. Yellowfin Tuna is the dominant species caught within our EEZ with an

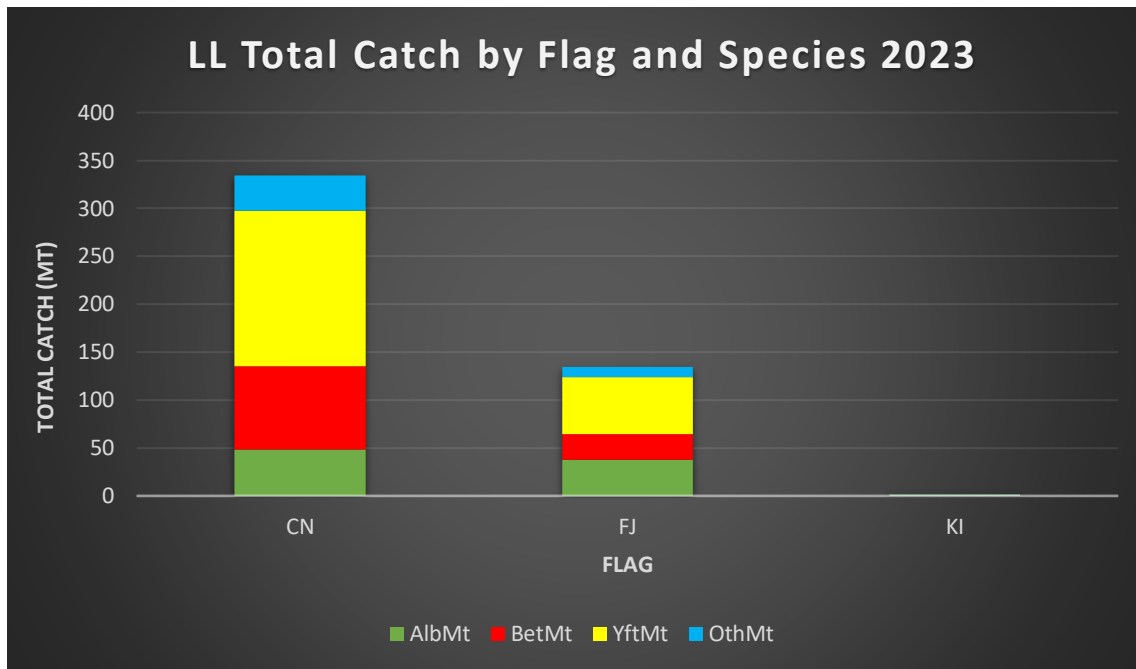
estimate catch of 221mt. Bigeye tuna accounts for second most catch taken within our EEZ with an estimate of 114mt. The last of the target tuna species is Albacore tuna, and its catch is estimated to be around 86mt. There are also other species taken within our EEZ and it is estimated to be around 47mt. These longline vessels are mostly flagged by Fiji and China.

The last point we needed to clarify on this report was on figure 5 for LL catch in our EEZ. The data retrieved from Tufman 2 show that there was fishing by Kiribati LL Flag vessels inside our EEZ. In order to align this report with our Licensing obligation, we note there were no Kiribati LL vessels licensed by TFD in 2023. The point arises within our internal discussion and it was clarified by SPC that this LL vessel was Chartered by KI.

**Figure 4: Total raised purse seine catch estimates (mt) in Tuvalu EEZ by flag and species for 2023. Source: TUFMAN 2**



**Figure 5: Total raised catch estimates (mt) in Tuvalu EEZ by flag and species for 2023. Source: TUFMAN 2**



## 5.0 SOCIO ECONOMIC FATCORS

The fisheries licensing continues provide fisheries revenue to the Government of Tuvalu annually. This is crucial for sustaining government services, especially those related to health, education, and other areas of government expenditure.

## 6.0 DISPOSAL OF CATCH

The Tuvalu Purse Seine vessels transhipped in Tuvalu and other ports in the region. Data is provided in the Annex on CMM reporting.

## 7.0 ONSHORE DEEVELOPMENT

The GOT's commercial fishery interests are represented by the National Fisheries Corporation of Tuvalu (NAFICOT), which has undergone reform to conform to the requirements of the Public Enterprises (Performance and Accountability) Act 2009. In 2020, the newly appointed Chief Executive Officer and the Financial Officer officially created the NAFICOT management. The NAFICOT started marketing catches of local fishermen at the end of 2022.

## 8.0 FUTURE PROSPECT OF FISHERY

Despite significant obstacles, Tuvalu currently promotes domestication of its tuna fisheries. However, the ability to place seafarers to work on fishing vessels would be an important step in the development of our resources.

## 9.0 STATUS OF TUNA FISHERY AND DATA COLLECTION

### 9.1 LOGSHEET DATA COLLECTION

Logsheet data are collected weekly by the Tuvalu Fisheries Department, through emails from vessel operators. These logsheets are to be submitted by the vessel operator within 7 working days for Purse Seiners and 14 working days for Longliners after completion of a trip. For vessels offloading in port Funafuti, their logsheets are collected onboard the vessels by our compliance officers and handed over to our data entry officers so that data can be entered accordingly into the Tufman 2 database. These logsheets are verified daily by authorized officers who have access into system. Available data shows that Tuvalu Flagged Purse Seiners' Logsheets have 100% coverage.

### 9.2 OBSERVER PROGRAM

In 2023, there were 74 active observers since after a long break due to COVID-19. Tuvalu's observer programme (TVOB) has continued their normal routine in placing of observer on Purse seiner (to contribute to the achievement of 100% coverage) and with plan to place more on Fish carrier. There were 74 active observers and there were plans to recruit more observers soon.

## 10.0 CMM REPORTING

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

<b>CMM 2009 -03 [Swordfish], Para 8</b>	Not applicable – There were no Tuvalu-flagged vessels recorded fishing in the Convention Area South of 20 degree South.																		
<b>Observer coverage (WCPFC 11 decision – para 484 (b))</b>	<p>There were 95.5% the number of trips that a Tuvalu-flagged vessel fished were covered by observers.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="459 785 1337 986"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">CCM Fleet</th> <th rowspan="2">Fishery</th> <th colspan="3">No. of Trips</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Total Estimates</th> <th>Observed</th> <th>%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>TV</td> <td>PS</td> <td>66</td> <td>63</td> <td>95.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						CCM Fleet	Fishery	No. of Trips			Total Estimates	Observed	%	TV	PS	66	63	95.5%
CCM Fleet	Fishery	No. of Trips																	
		Total Estimates	Observed	%															
TV	PS	66	63	95.5%															
<b>CMM 2009-06 [Transshipment], Para 11 (ANNEX II)</b>	<p>(1) The total quantities, by weight, of highly migratory fish stocks covered by this measure that were transshipped by fishing vessels the CCM is responsible for reporting against, with those quantities broken down by:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="459 1248 2018 1388"> <thead> <tr> <th>a) Offloaded and received;</th> <th>b) Transshipped in port, transshipped at sea in</th> <th>c) Transshipped inside the Convention Area and</th> <th>d) Caught inside the Convention Area and</th> <th>e) Species</th> <th>f) Product form</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						a) Offloaded and received;	b) Transshipped in port, transshipped at sea in	c) Transshipped inside the Convention Area and	d) Caught inside the Convention Area and	e) Species	f) Product form							
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		areas of national jurisdiction, and transshipped beyond areas of national jurisdiction;	transshipped outside the Convention Area;	caught outside the Convention Area;		
40,607MT	Honiara, Solomon Rabaul, PNG Pohnpei, FSM Tarawa, Kiribati Christmas, Kiribati Funafuti, Tuvalu Busan, Korea Majuro, Marshall Islands	Inside the Convention Area	Inside the Convention Area	SKJ (29,193MT)	Frozen whole round	
	Honiara, Solomon Rabaul, PNG Pohnpei, FSM Tarawa, Kiribati Christmas, Kiribati Funafuti, Tuvalu Busan, Korea Majuro, Marshall Islands	Inside the Convention Area	Inside the Convention Area	BET (209 MT)	Frozen whole round	
	Honiara, Solomon Rabaul, PNG Pohnpei, FSM Tarawa, Kiribati Christmas, Kiribati Funafuti, Tuvalu	Inside the Convention Area	Inside the Convention Area	YFT (11,205MT)	Frozen whole round	

	Busan, Korea Majuro, Marshall Islands				
<p>(2) The number of transshipments involving highly migratory fish stocks covered by this measure by fishing vessels that responsible for reporting against, broken down by:</p>					
a) Offload 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 outside the Convention Area	e) Fishing gear	
61	Honiara, Solomon Rabaul, PNG Pohnpei, FSM Tarawa, Kiribati Christmas, Kiribati Funafuti, Tuvalu Busan, Korea Majuro, Marshall Islands	Inside the Convention Area	Inside the Convention Area	PS	
<b>CMM 2011-03</b> <b>[Impact of PS</b>	There were no recorded interactions or encirclements of cetaceans by TV-flagged vessels in 2023.				



<b>fishing on cetaceans], Para 5</b>	
<b>CM 2018-03 [Seabirds] Para 13</b>	There were no recorded interactions with seabirds by TV-flagged vessels in 2023, nor the previous 5 years. There were no TV-flagged longline vessels operating in 2023.

**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°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 – 25oS’. For CCMs fishing in all areas, provide separate tables for each area.

**2** Provide data as captures per one thousand hooks.

**Not applicable** - There were no TV-flagged longline vessels operating in 2023

**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						
Other options 25°S-30°S	HS						
	WB						
Other options north of 23°N	TL						
	SS/BC/WB/DSLS						
Provide any other combination of mitigation measures here	SS/BC/WB/(MOD or BDB)						
	Totals (must equal 100%)						

<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.

**Not applicable** - There were no TV-flagged longline vessels operating in 2023

**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>					

**Not applicable** - There were no TV-flagged longline vessels operating in 2023

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

<b>CMM 2006-04</b> <b>[South West striped Marlin], Para 4</b>	Not applicable - No Tuvalu-flagged vessels fished south of 15 degrees south in 2023.
<b>CMM 2015-02</b> <b>[South Pacific Albacore] Para 4</b>	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
<b>CMM 2019-03</b> <b>[North Pacific</b>	Not applicable - No Tuvalu flagged vessels fished in the CMM area in 2023.

<b>Albacore], Para 3</b>	
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**Not applicable** - There were no TV-flagged longline vessels operating in 2023