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**ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE WCPFC RECORD OF FISHING VESSELS (RFV) AND CHARTER NOTIFICATIONS**

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**WCPFC-TCC21-2025-RP05**  
**20 August 2025**

**Submitted by the Secretariat**

## Purpose

1. This paper summarises information from the WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels (RFV) and reports on its operation.

## Introduction

2. The *Conservation and Management Measure on the WCPFC RFV and Authorization to Fish* (CMM 2018-06) and the *Standards, Specifications and Procedures for the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission RFV* (RFV SSPs) (CMM 2022-05) regulates how the RFV operates and sets standards for data quality.
3. All vessels flagged to WCPFC Members, Cooperating Non-Members, and Participating Territories (CCMs) that have been, and are currently authorised to fish in the Convention Area beyond each CCM's area of national jurisdiction are shown on the RFV. CCMs are required to maintain the accuracy and completeness<sup>1</sup> of the data for each of their flagged vessels. A vessel that shows as "RFV Listed" is currently active and therefore, is authorised to fish in the Convention Area. A deleted vessel will show as "Not Currently RFV Listed" and is no longer authorised to fish in the Convention Area.
4. A significant upgrade of the RFV was initiated in 2022 and the new system released in March 2023<sup>2</sup>. A supporting "Training" version of the upgraded RFV was released at the same time. This allowed CCMs to use the new functions and become familiar with the new format. This site remains available.
5. This system meets all the requirements for the RFV and includes additional features that streamline and simplify how CCMs maintain their vessel records, providing them with greater control. As with all new systems developments, incremental enhancements based on feedback from CCMs and Secretariat staff has continued since its introduction.
6. In 2023, voluntary contribution from the United States supported the development of a mobile RFV application that works offline to show current "RFV Listed" vessels, updating when online. The mobile application has been especially useful for inspections and MCS in low-connectivity areas, with installation instructions on the WCPFC support webpage.
7. The RFV is publicly available on the WCPFC website. A range of summary statistics and data filters are also available. Secure sections of each vessel's webpage relating to the Host CCMs for charters and Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) details can only be accessed by authorised users of the flag CCM.
8. All data in this paper are based on data extracted as of 14th April 2025. The information about upgrades to the RFV reflects the status as of August 2025.

## Upgrades to the RFV

### Charters

9. Building on the 2023 rollout of upgraded RFV functions, further enhancements were released in 2024 and 2025 to support more accurate and streamlined charter record management by CCMs. These upgrades are aligned with the requirements of CMM 2018-06 and CMM 2024-03, and their associated standards and procedures under CMM 2022-05.
10. The upgraded functionality introduces new features designed to better support both flag and host CCMs in meeting their charter notification obligations. Two of the most significant updates are the expanded number of data fields that can be edited by charter parties, and the enhanced visibility and scope of the status indicators which automatically identify and highlight discrepancies or pending actions such as "Missing Matching Charter" status when only one party has submitted notification details, and "Needs Review" status where submitted details by the two parties do not align.
11. The addition of a tick box to confirm that a charter began as reported is now available with a supporting "Confirmation Pending" status. This feature will simplify processes and improve the quality of data available to support more accurate reporting against obligations that require assessments of for example attributed catch under CMM 2023-01.

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<sup>1</sup>Of the RFV SSPs CMM 2022-05

<sup>2</sup>The upgraded RFV went live for CCMs and the public on 3 April 2023.

12. To facilitate improved oversight, CCMs can now more easily view and manage their records through the “Browse My Charters” function. The upgrade also introduces the ability to cancel a charter prior to its commencement if the arrangement is no longer proceeding. In addition, enhanced functionality allows CCMs to edit key fields - such as the Charterer’s name and address, start and end dates, application area, and notes - up until a charter is confirmed as started. After that point, editing is more limited, with the start date locked to preserve data integrity.
13. These upgrades enhance CCM control over charter data, improve the reliability of charter reporting, and support more consistent compliance with the RFV provisions. While an initial increase in flagged discrepancies is expected as the new system becomes established, this transition reflects a shift towards more proactive and accurate charter record management.
14. Further information can be found on the [Helpdesk](#).

#### *Vessel and management and VMS enhancements*

15. As part of the ongoing improvements process, a new section was added to the RFV dashboard to highlight data quality issues requiring action by CCMs. These include missing IMO numbers, owner related data fields and authorisation related data fields.
16. To improve the search capability for ease of use and support data quality by reducing potential duplicate vessel records, the system now reviews previous names as part of any search.
17. The fished/did not fish reports were upgraded with improved tools to help CCMs finalise their submissions and automatically notify the Secretariat. Where necessary the Secretariat can reopen reports to allow CCMs to make changes. Additional Secretariat tools were also developed to improve accessibility to data across CCMs in support of monitoring reporting and CCM reviews.
18. VMS-related functions were enhanced to generate MTU Audits reports, enabling Secretariat monitoring of compliance reporting requirements. A bulk upload facility was also created to support efficient submission of MTU audit data.

#### *View of combined public RFV details across RFMOs*

19. The WCPFC RFV vessel and authorization data are integrated into an IMCS Network online tool ([CRAVT](#)). This system automatically combines vessel authorisation data with information from WCPFC and other RFMOs and Regional Fisheries Bodies. Organisations currently participating in automated data sharing alongside WCPFC include CCSBT, FFA, IATTC, IOTC, NPFC and SPRFMO. CRAVT simplifies access to information on vessels authorised to operate in RFMOs and RFBs and allows records to be compared.

### **Summary of information in the RFV**

#### *Charter Notification Scheme*

20. The RFV reflects charter arrangements notified to the Commission in accordance with [CMM 2024-03 Conservation and Management Measure for Charter Notification Scheme](#) which replaced CMM 2021-04 and entered into force in February 2025.
21. This measure establishes the requirements for notifying charter arrangements and specifies the information to be submitted for each chartered vessel.
22. Paragraph 8 of this measure sets an expiry date of 28 of February 2028 unless renewed by the Commission.

#### *Breakdown of vessels that are RFV listed*

23. The number of vessels that were RFV listed peaked at 8,314 in 2009 marking the highest point in the available record. Since then, vessel numbers have followed a general downward trend, with occasional plateaus. From 2010 to 2014, annual figures remained relatively stable at around 5,900–6,200 vessels. However, starting in 2015, the number of listed vessels began to decline more significantly, falling from 5,703 in 2015 to 3,114 in 2025 - a reduction of nearly 45% over the last decade (Table 1). While the decline was steepest between 2015 and 2020, with annual reductions averaging around 8–10%, recent years show signs of

stabilisation, with a marginal 0.7% increase from 2024 to 2025<sup>3</sup>. The relative proportions of vessel types in 2024 remains similar to recent years with the majority of RFV vessels classified as longliners (57%) followed by purse seiners (17%), fish carriers (12%), and bunker and support vessels (9%) (Figure 1).

24. Vessels from China, Japan and Chinese Taipei continue to represent the majority of vessels authorised to operate in the Convention Area. In 2024, 3,093 vessels were registered representing a 4% decline from 2023.
25. Flag CCM information shows that most RFV listed vessels were built within the last 35 years. However, anecdotal reports from some CCMs suggests that, in certain cases, the recorded year reflects the date of re-flagging or a major refit, rather than the vessel's original construction date<sup>4</sup> (Figure 2). Linking vessel history helps to reduce this issue, but additional checks will be required for newly listed or "re-listed" vessels to ensure that data consistently reflects the year of first construction. Improving the accuracy of this information is important, as it provides one of the inputs used to assess potential changes in fishing effort by CCMs during the annual Compliance Monitoring Review process.

#### *Completeness of RFV data fields*

26. An evaluation of the completeness of the RFV fields by CCM is shown in Figure 3.
27. When a new vessel is added to the RFV, or when a vessels status is changed to "RFV listed", the RFV system user interface checks the information provided by CCMs against the RFV SSP "minimum data requirements" and the associated standards and specifications.
28. Some data fields may be blank in certain circumstances, for example, authorization periods for vessels that do not fish beyond their waters of national jurisdiction or for vessels that do not have freezer capacity. The Secretariat will periodically review blank data fields and, where necessary, follow-up with CCMs.
29. The RFV SSPs provides options for how to complete fields that a CCM considers to be "not applicable" or "NA". For example, for vessels without freezer capacity, "0" is to be entered for freezer capacity, and "NA" for freezer capacity units. This approach ensures more complete and accurate RFV data. However, Footnote 3 of CMM 2022-05 states, *"Although vessels with only the minimum required data will be added to and maintained on the RFV, this does not relieve the responsible CCM of its obligations to provide all the data required under the WCPFC's applicable conservation and management measures. The consequences of failing to provide such data will be specified outside of these SSPs, such as in the WCPFC's compliance monitoring scheme"*.
30. Despite these provisions, gaps in data fields remain and some information becomes outdated. For example, vessel authorization periods may expire, no information is provided on authorised species and/or areas, details on whether a vessel (other than purse seine) has authority to transship on the high seas of the Convention Area may change, and some vessels that meet the criteria for an IMO number still do not have one recorded<sup>5</sup>.
31. To improve RFV data quality, including completeness and to more fully implement the intent of Footnote 3, the Secretariat established a "Key Vessel Data Pending" section on the CCM RFV Dashboard. The criteria for key missing data are limited to:
  - Missing IMO / LR Number: If vessel is missing IMO / LR number and vessel is of less than 100 GT (or 100 GRT) down to a size of 12 meters in length overall (LOA).
  - Missing owner / master details: If vessel is missing owner name, owner address, master name or master nationality.
  - Missing authorization details: If vessel is missing authorization number granted by the flag State or form of authorization granted by the flag State or authorization area.

<sup>3</sup>WCPFC-SC21-GN-WP01: Overview of tuna fisheries in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean, including economic conditions - 2024 - Rev.01

<sup>4</sup>The RFV SSPs of CMM 2014-03 require the "year built" data field to reflect the "Year in which the vessel was built, as indicated on flag State registration or other appropriate documentation".

<sup>5</sup>WCPFC15 the Commission agreed to expand the requirements for IMO numbers. Effective 1 January 2016, flag CCMs shall ensure that all their fishing vessels that are authorised to be used for fishing in the Convention Area beyond the flag CCMs area of national jurisdiction and that are at least 100 GT or 100GRT in size have IMO or LR numbers issued to them. Effective 1 April 2020, flag CCMs were to ensure that all their motorized inboard fishing vessels of less than 100 GRT (or 100 GRT) down to a size of 12 meters in length overall (LOA), authorized to be used for fishing in the Convention Area beyond the flag CCMs area of national jurisdiction, have an IMO or LR issued (CMM 2018-06 footnote 4). (CMM 2018-06 footnote 4).

32. The Secretariat will periodically follow up on missing or incomplete data fields with CCMs where the gaps are not being addressed. This will assist CCMs and non-CCMs who rely on the RFV for operational purposes, such as port entry application reviews and MCS activities, and will reduce the need for *ad hoc* requests for clarification to the Secretariat. CCMs have expressed concerns regarding the number of active vessels with expired authorization periods, particularly in relation to high seas boarding and inspection and surveillance activities. In addition, several RFV data fields are critical to the Secretariat's verification of CCM annual reporting in accordance with Audit Points.

## Overview of vessel activity authorised on the RFV

### *Vessels authorised to transship*

33. The authorisation to transship status of vessels is shown on the RFV. High seas transshipment are prohibited for purse seine vessels. For other types of vessels, high seas transshipments are prohibited unless specifically authorised to do so by the flag CCM and where the vessel has an active status of RFV Listed (Figure 4).
34. Figure 4 shows the number and percentage of vessels authorised for high seas transshipments. While the number of authorisations was relatively stable from 2018-2022, there has been a general decline since 2022. While the number of vessels authorised to transship have declined, the percentage of vessels has declined at a slower rate and it remains above 50%. It should be noted that not all vessels authorised to transship actually conduct transshipments (Refer to [WCPFC-TCC21-2025-RP03](#)).

### *Vessels under charter*

35. Both flag CCMs and host CCMs enter their charter notifications directly into the RFV. An automated alert is generated when one party submits information, indicating that follow-up action is required by the other party. The numbers of charters since 1997 are shown in Table 2; while Figures 5 and 6 provides details on the CCMs involved in chartering. Annual charter numbers remained relatively stable between 2020 and 2023. However, there has been a notable decline in longline charters in 2024 and 2025 (year-to-date). This decline is the primary driver behind the overall reduction in total charters during this period, while purse seine charters have increased over the same period.

### *Trends in chartering*

36. Overall charters have increased since 2014 (Figure 5). Prior to 2016, most charters were to the Solomon Islands. From 2015 onwards, a high number of charters have been to American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and Guam, as well as FSM and Kiribati (Figure 5). All charters to US territories were from US flagged vessels, whereas most charters to Pacific Island CCMs are from China and Chinese Taipei (Figure 6). The majority of these charters involve longline vessels (Table 2 and Figure 7).
37. More detailed trends in flag CCMs is shown by fishing vessel flag and vessel type in Figure 7 to Figure 13. In 2024, most charters were of Chinese and Chinese Taipei vessels chartered to Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, and the Solomon Islands. There were also significant numbers of charters from the Philippines to Papua New Guinea. The majority of these vessels were longline vessels (Figure 7). The large number of longline vessels from the US chartering to American Samoa, CNMI, and Guam are no longer apparent after 2023 (Figure 7 and Figure 8).

## CCM Reporting under the RFV

### *Fished/did not fish reporting*

38. As part of annual reporting, each CCM must identify whether each of their active vessels on the RFV in the preceding year fished or did not fish in the Convention Area in that year. This information is used:
- to support the Secretariat's review of the applicability of certain CCMs;
  - to support compliance reviews;
  - to support MCS analyses; and

- in preparing the Compliance Monitoring Report (CMR).
39. Since late 2023, CCMs were using the RFV fished/did not fished facility. The Secretariat has now also begun streamlining its internal review process as a result of the recent Secretariat restructure including proactive checks with CCMs on vessel statuses in 2025. This occurs before CCMs fished/did not fish reports are due on 1 July. These early checks allow Secretariat staff to compare information when it is submitted, identifying and following up on potential issues more promptly so that any inconsistencies can be resolved in a more timely manner. The date the Secretariat began follow-up with CCMs on RY2024 submissions was significantly earlier than in past years. All except 1 fished/did not fish report was received on time and many reviews were completed in advance of the release of the draft Compliance Monitoring Report in late July, simplifying CCM reporting. Table 3 summarises 2024 fished/did not fish reporting by CCMs.

#### *Review of RFV implementation by applicable CCMs under the Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS) 2014 - 2024*

40. Figure 14 shows the result of evaluations of CCM compliance with RFV obligations under the CMS over time. Implementation of RFV requirements initially posed challenges for CCMs, however, this has steadily improved since 2013. The RFV reporting requirements (CMM 2014-03) were reviewed through the CMS in the earlier years (2014 - 2016 activities), and at that time the outcome was that many CCMs had difficulties to complete all required data fields for each vessel the CCM has entered into the RFV. In more recent years, implementation has been consistently high.
41. In 2025, the Compliance Monitoring Report for RY2024 assesses two obligations from 2018-06; paragraph 4 reviewing implementation of CCMs vessel authorization requirements which was last assessed in 2013, and paragraph 9 reporting on fished/did not fish report submissions which has been assessed each year since 2018. The REPORT form of CMM 2018-06 paragraph 4 has not yet been assessed.

#### **An Overview of the Type and Outcomes of Vessel related Cases on the Compliance Case File System**

42. The Compliance Case File System (CCFS) records and tracks progress on investigations of alleged infringements of CMM obligations notified to the Secretariat through ROP reporting or directly from CCMs. Outcomes of cases relating to RFV requirements and vessel activity are shown in Figure 15. References to CMMs include both current and historical versions of the RFV related obligations.
43. Most cases relate to vessel marking and identification (CMM 2004-03) and VMS related reporting (CMM 2014-02). The reduction in VMS related cases reflects a change in process for some vessel reporting issues that reflect CMM 2014-02 9a requirements. Where a vessel reports normally to the national VMS but there is a problem in transferring data from the service provider to the Commission VMS, the Secretariat resolves the case directly with the CCM. By contrast, other cases are created as the outcome of inspection or surveillance activities where a vessel is not reporting correctly to the Commission VMS or where a vessel is not authorised to operate in the Convention Area (i.e. not on the RFV or with a deleted status).
44. Overall, vessel-related cases have declined over the analysis period. While VMS related cases (CMM 2014-02) have remained high, there was a substantial drop during the COVID-19 years. A notable peak was observed in 2023 for Convention related cases (for example [Convention Article 24\(3\)](#) related to flag State authorisation of fishing activities).

#### **Secretariat Observations**

45. In 2024 and 2025, almost all CCMs submitted fished/did-not-fish reports on time, with only one late submission. Proactive Secretariat checks and earlier follow-up enabled many reviews to be completed, and most issues resolved, ahead of the release of the draft Compliance Monitoring Report. The June 2025 upgrade to RFV charter management functions, which included new status indicators and the ability to cancel charters prior to commencement, has improved CCM oversight of charter records and the timeliness of resolving discrepancies between flag and host CCM notifications.
46. Footnote 3 of CMM 2022-05 recognises the importance of maintaining accurate, complete and up-to-date RFV information. The upgraded RFV tools, including the “Key Vessel Data” Pending function, continue to help CCMs to identify and address data gaps, which supports the reliability of the RFV as a core dataset for

the Commission, individual CCMs and broader MCS activities. The upgraded RFV also allows Secretariat resources to focus more on supporting CCMs to improve data quality, supported by analytical tools that help assess wider issues such as duplicate vessels and potentially incorrect data, for example, changes in vessel characteristics across a vessel's history such as year built. These improvements reduce reliance on monitoring and verification processes during CMR discussions under the Compliance Monitoring Scheme.

## Tables

**Table 1: Number of vessels on the RFV 2008-2024.** The numbers shown for any one year represent vessels listed at a single point in time. Data taken at other times may vary given flag state activity to manage their vessels as well as when data quality reviews have resulted in changes.

Year	Active vessels
2008	6
2009	8,314
2010	6,215
2011	5,987
2012	5,903
2013	5,936
2014	6,082
2015	5,703
2016	4,683
2017	4,572
2018	4,004
2019	3,947
2020	3,542
2021	3,447
2022	3,358
2023	3,230
2024	3,093
2025	3,114



**Table 2: Summary of the vessels notified as being chartered, leased or other mechanisms by CCMs, by gear and by year (CMM 2021-04 paragraph 6).**

Chartering CCM	Vessel type	Fishing vessel CCM	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
American Samoa	Longliner	United States of America	133	0	137	0	0	0
Fiji	Longliner	China	0	0	2	0	0	0
Federated States of Micronesia	Longliner	China	59	38	20	30	22	20
	Longliner	Chinese Taipei	20	0	0	1	2	2
	Purse seiner	Chinese Taipei	2	0	0	0	0	0
Kiribati	Longliner	China	30	34	39	77	79	92
	Purse seiner	China	14	16	14	14	18	14
	Purse seiner	Nauru	0	2	3	5	6	6
Korea (Republic of)	Bunker	Panama	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Fish carrier	Panama	0	1	0	0	0	0
Marshall Islands	Longliner	China	13	43	18	30	25	29
	Longliner	Federated States of Micronesia	0	0	0	0	11	0
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	Longliner	United States of America	134	141	135	145	0	0
Papua New Guinea	Fish carrier	Philippines	10	13	8	5	5	5
	Longliner	China	0	0	10	9	0	0
	Longliner	Vanuatu	2	0	0	0	0	0
	Purse seiner	Japan	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Purse seiner	Nauru	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Purse seiner	Papua New Guinea	3	2	1	1	0	0
	Purse seiner	Philippines	26	29	29	19	20	17
	Purse seiner	Chinese Taipei	0	0	1	1	5	8
	Purse seiner	Vanuatu	0	0	0	2	5	5
	Support vessel	Philippines	3	18	17	19	12	13
Philippines	Purse seiner	Papua New Guinea	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Support vessel	Philippines	0	1	1	0	0	0
Solomon Islands	Fish carrier	Chinese Taipei	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Longliner	China	0	11	5	0	3	3
	Longliner	Fiji	1	1	2	0	0	0
	Longliner	Chinese Taipei	27	27	46	56	28	23
	Longliner	Vanuatu	0	0	0	1	1	1
	Purse seiner	China	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Purse seiner	Chinese Taipei	0	0	1	1	0	0
Tuvalu	Purse seiner	Chinese Taipei	0	0	0	0	0	1
Samoa	Longliner	Cook Islands	0	0	2	0	0	0
	Longliner	Vanuatu	20	0	10	14	16	0

**Table 3: Number of vessels on the RFV in 2024 that CCMs have indicated have fished or not fished.**

CCM	Did not fish	Fished	Total vessels
Australia	0	5	5
Canada	6	0	6
China	242	358	600
Ecuador	2	0	2
Philippines	165	252	417
Chinese Taipei	122	498	620

Figures

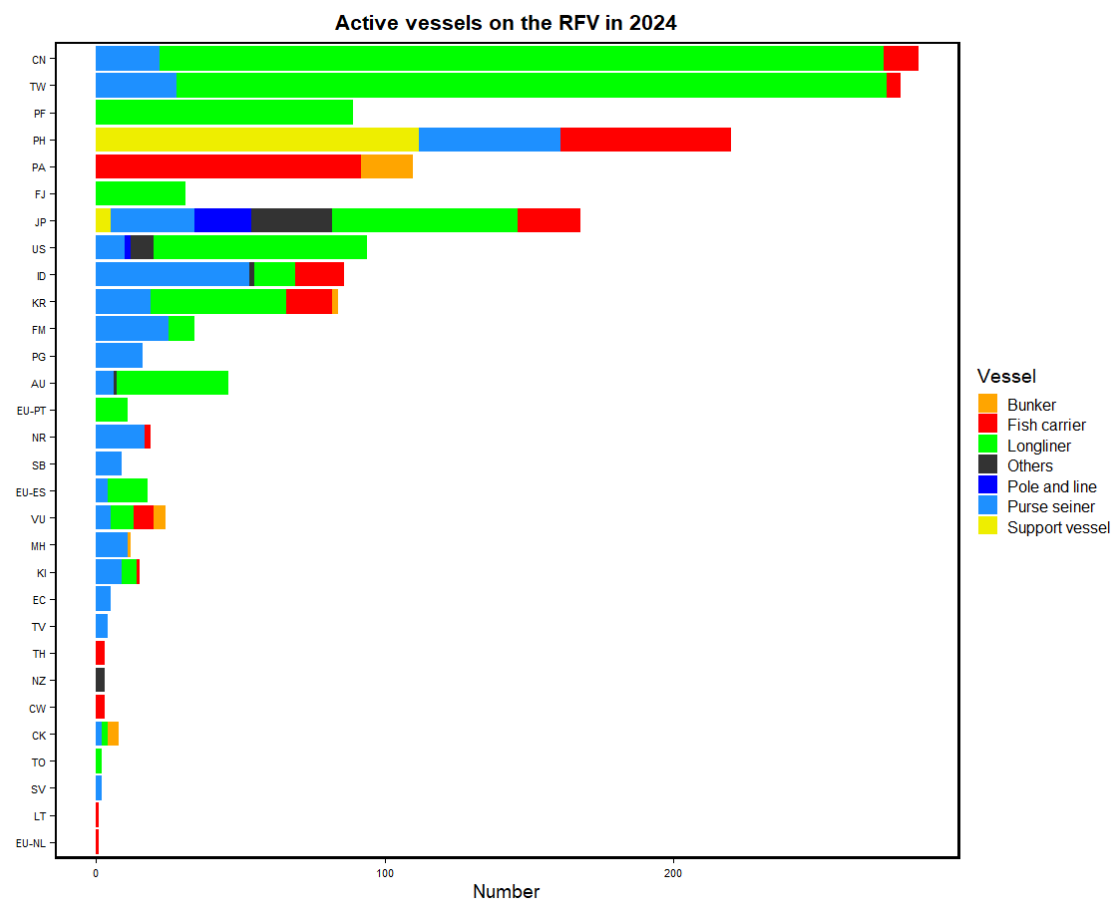


Figure 1: Active vessels on the RFV by flag State and vessel type.

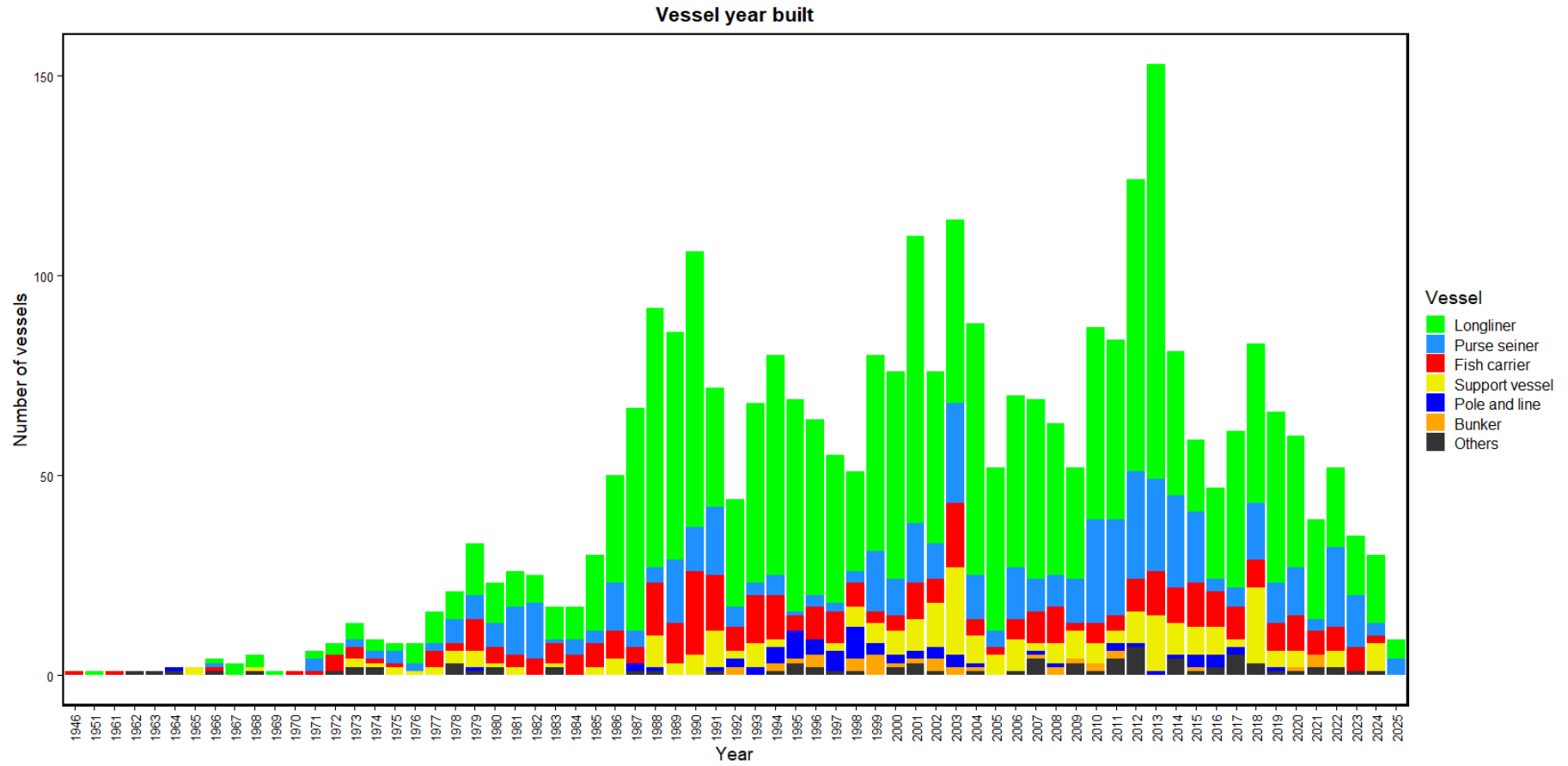


Figure 2: Year built for vessels on the RFV from 1945 to 2025, where the data were provided.

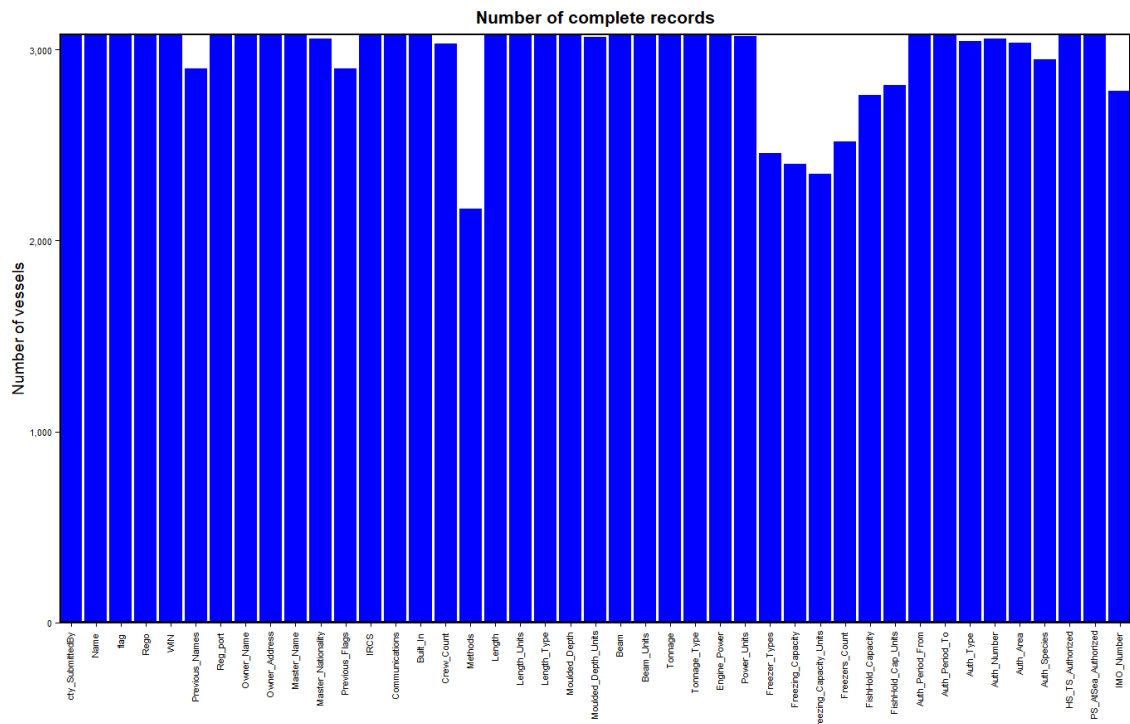


Figure 3: WCPFC data fields on the RFV and the level of completeness.

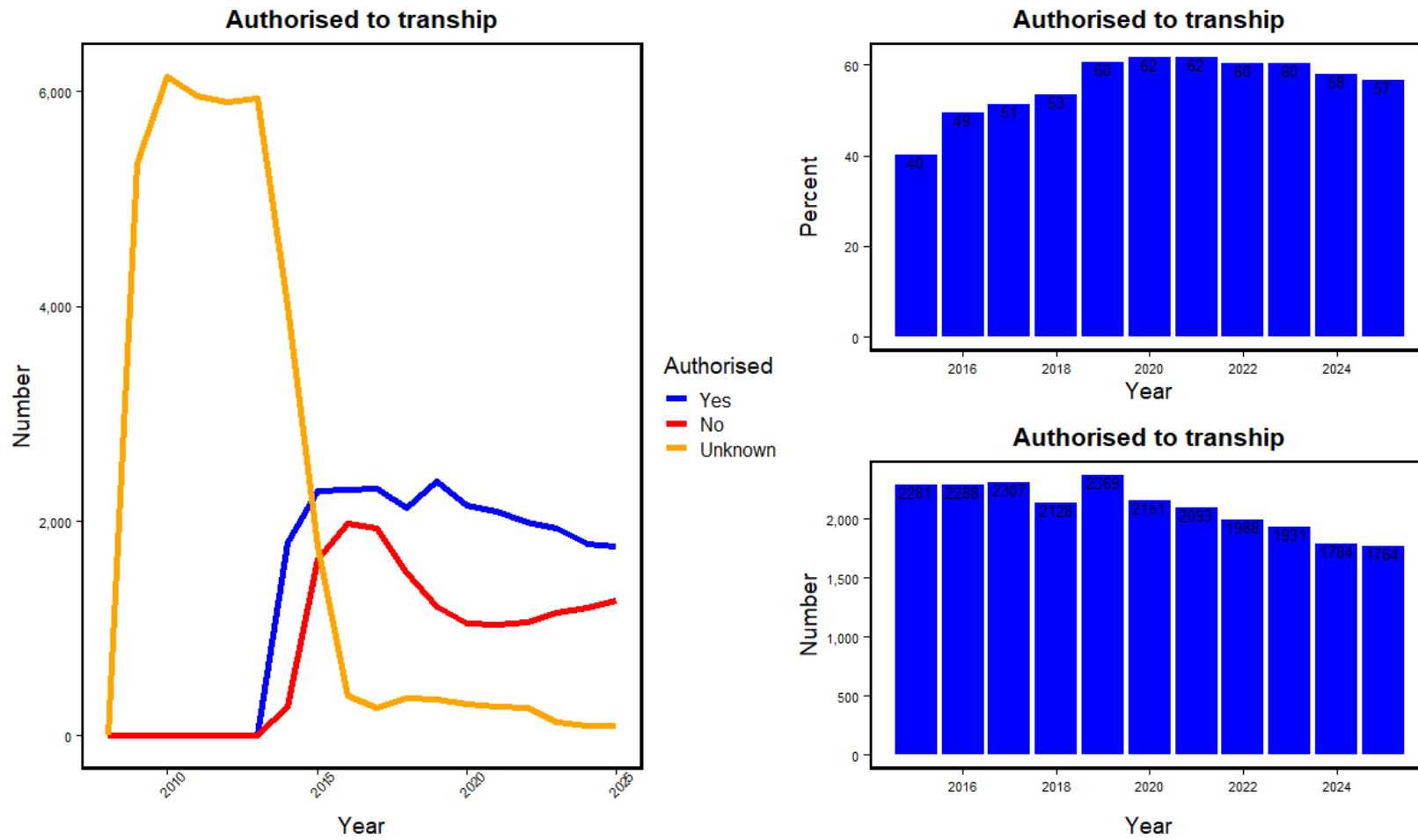


Figure 4: Percentage of vessels on the WCPFC RFV that are authorised to transship.

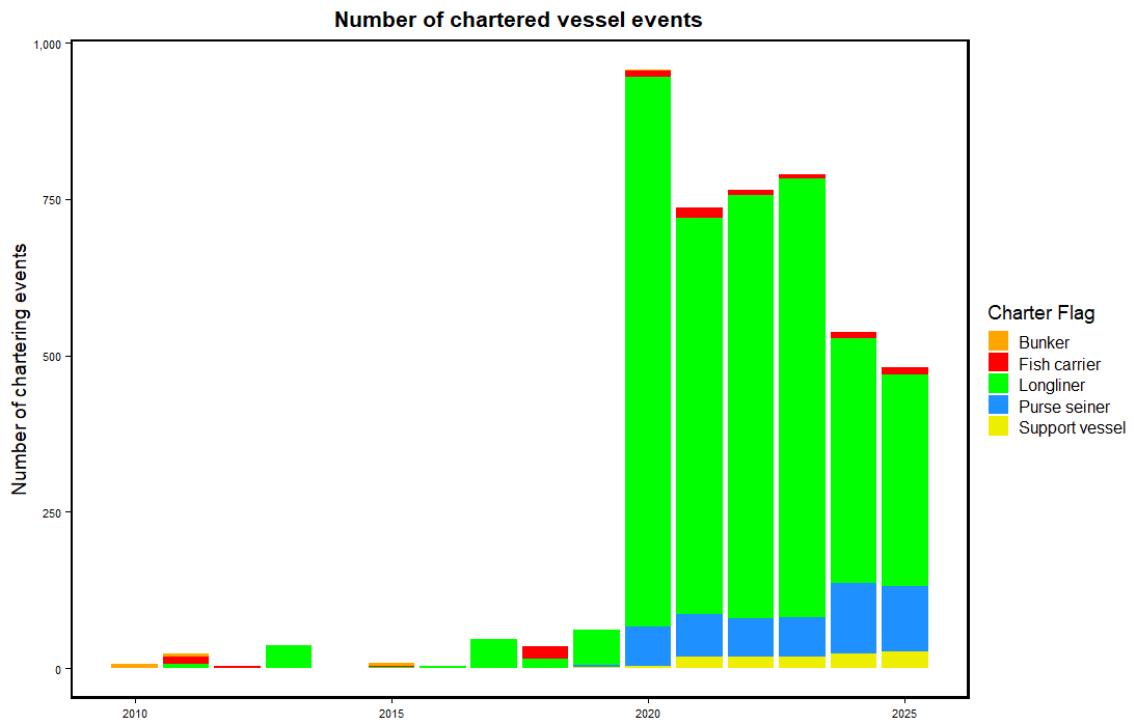


Figure 5: Comparison of the number of chartered vessels recorded on the WCPFC RFV between 2009 and July 2025.

# Charter CCM

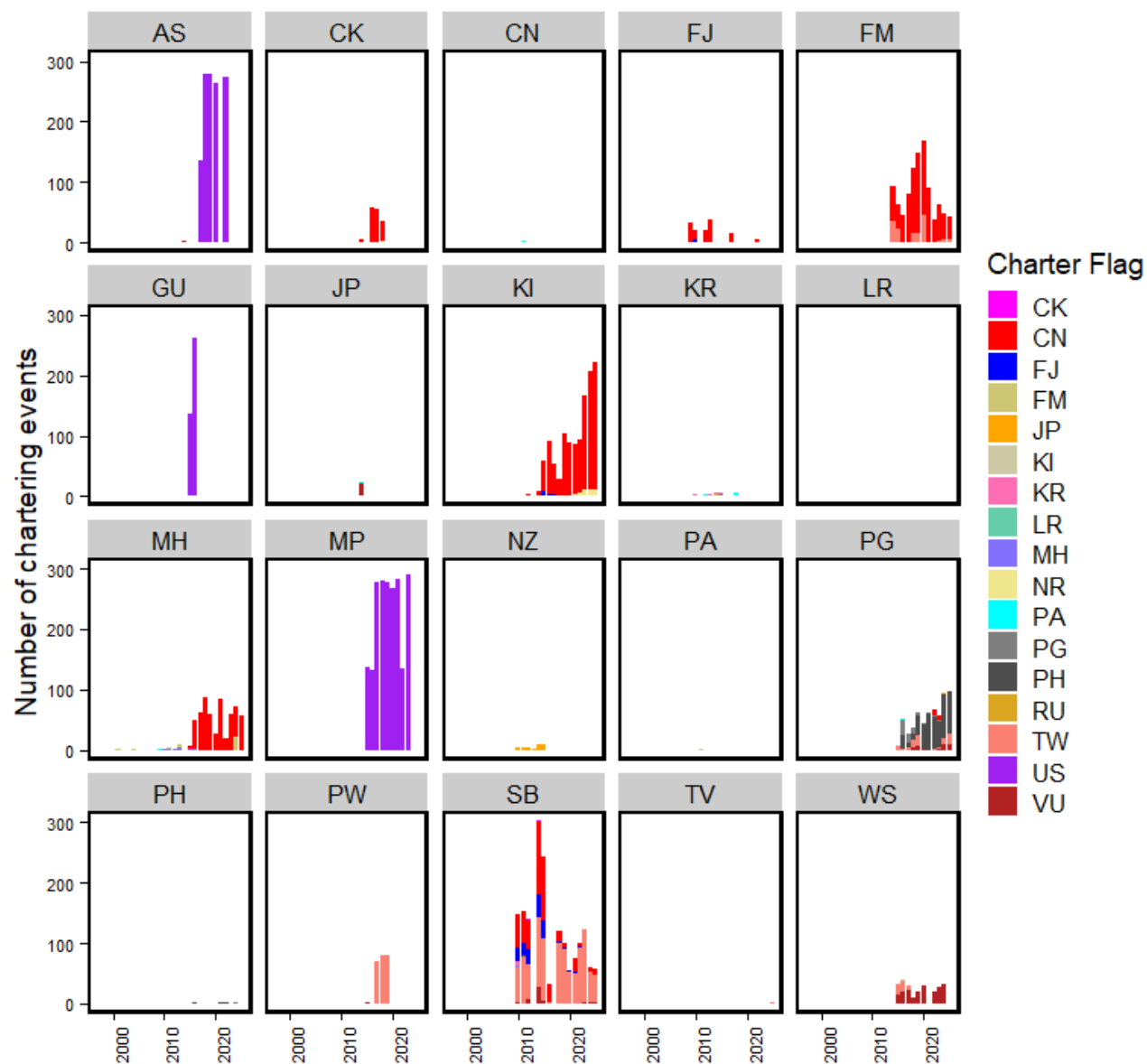


Figure 6: The number of charter events in the WCPFC Convention Area by year, chartering (Host) CCM and vessel flag State from 2009 - July 2025.



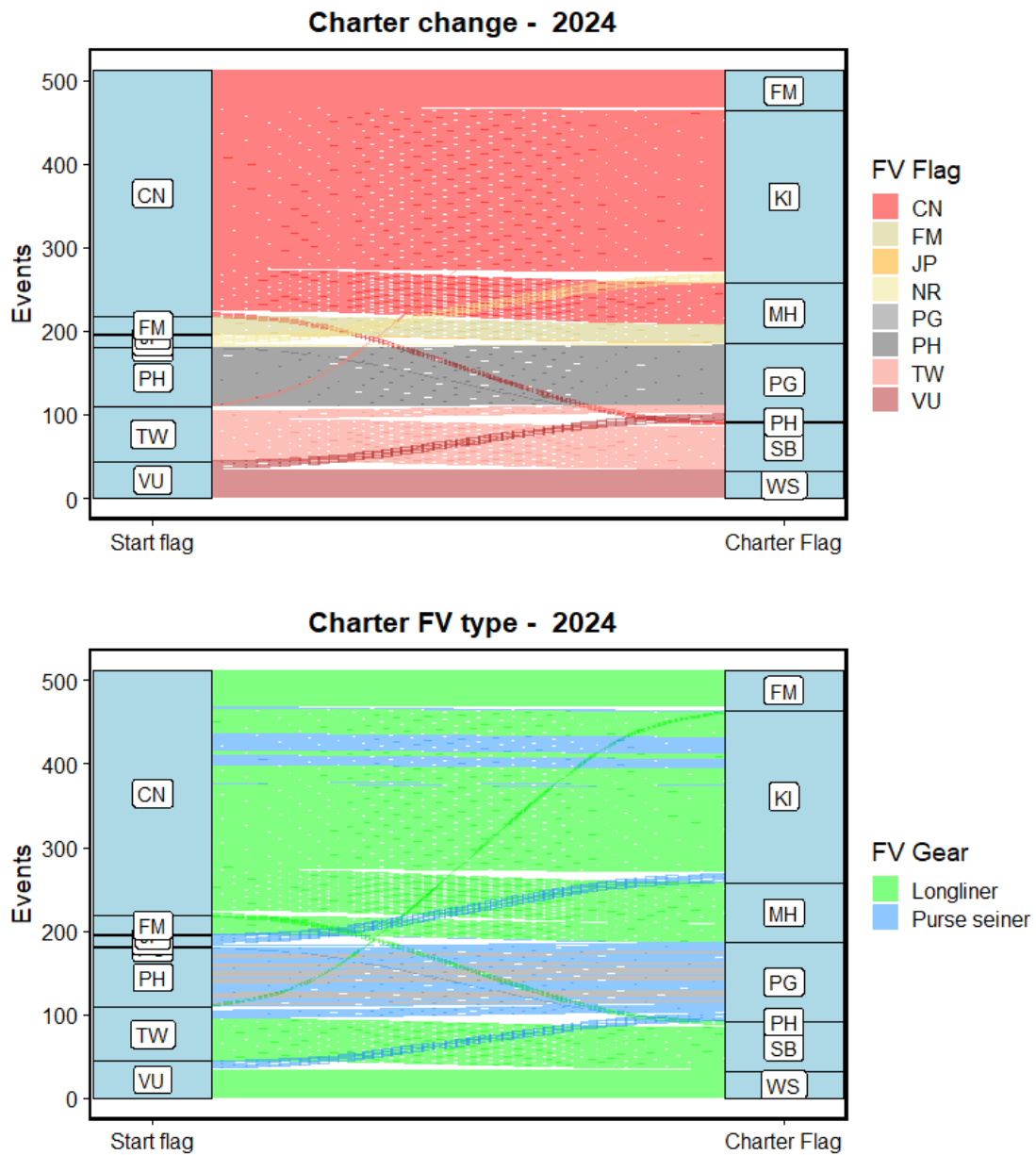


Figure 7: Change in flag through chartering from fishing vessel flag to charter flag (top) and by vessel type (bottom) in 2024.

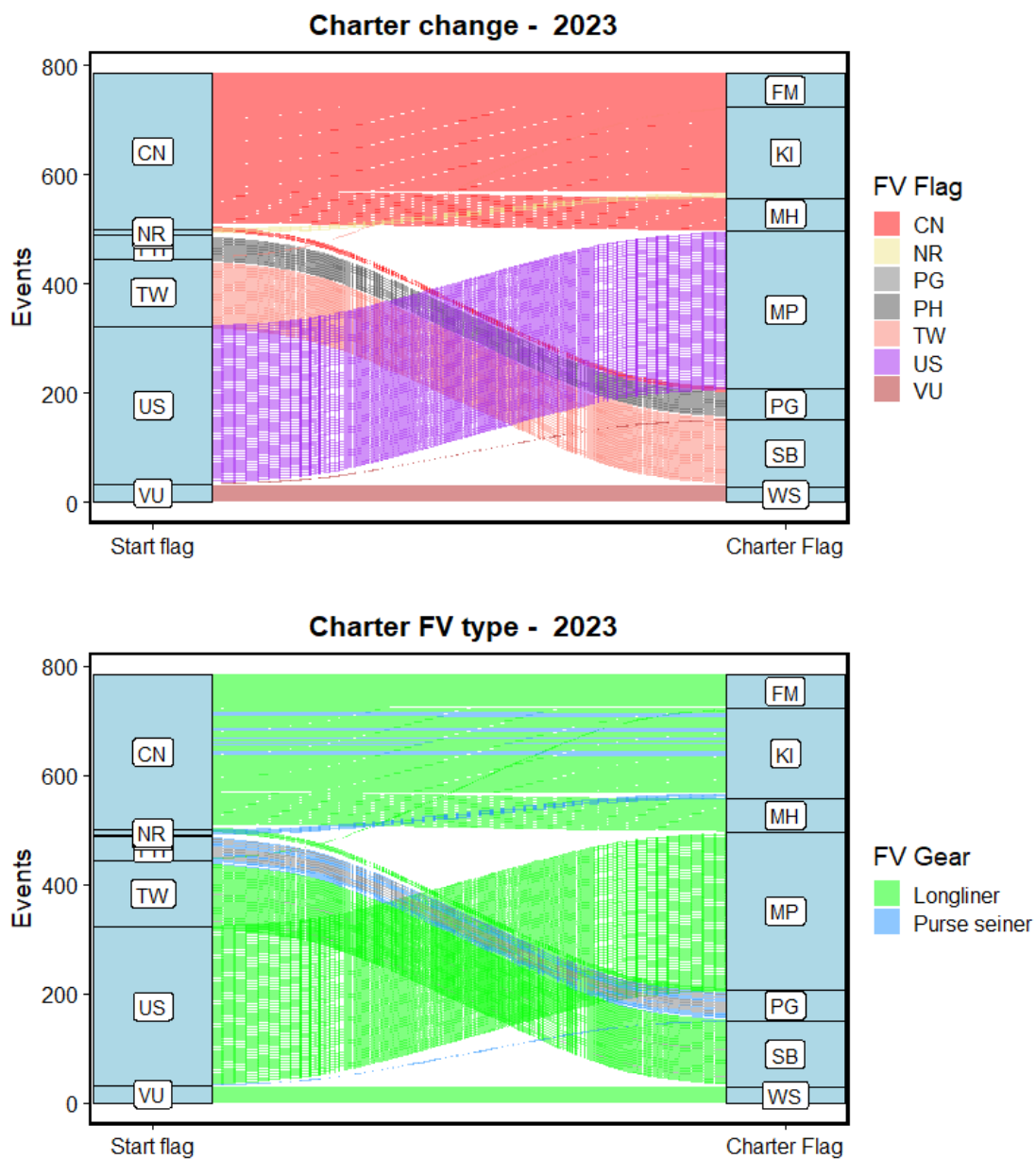


Figure 8: Change in flag through chartering from fishing vessel flag to charter flag (top) and by vessel type (bottom) in 2023.

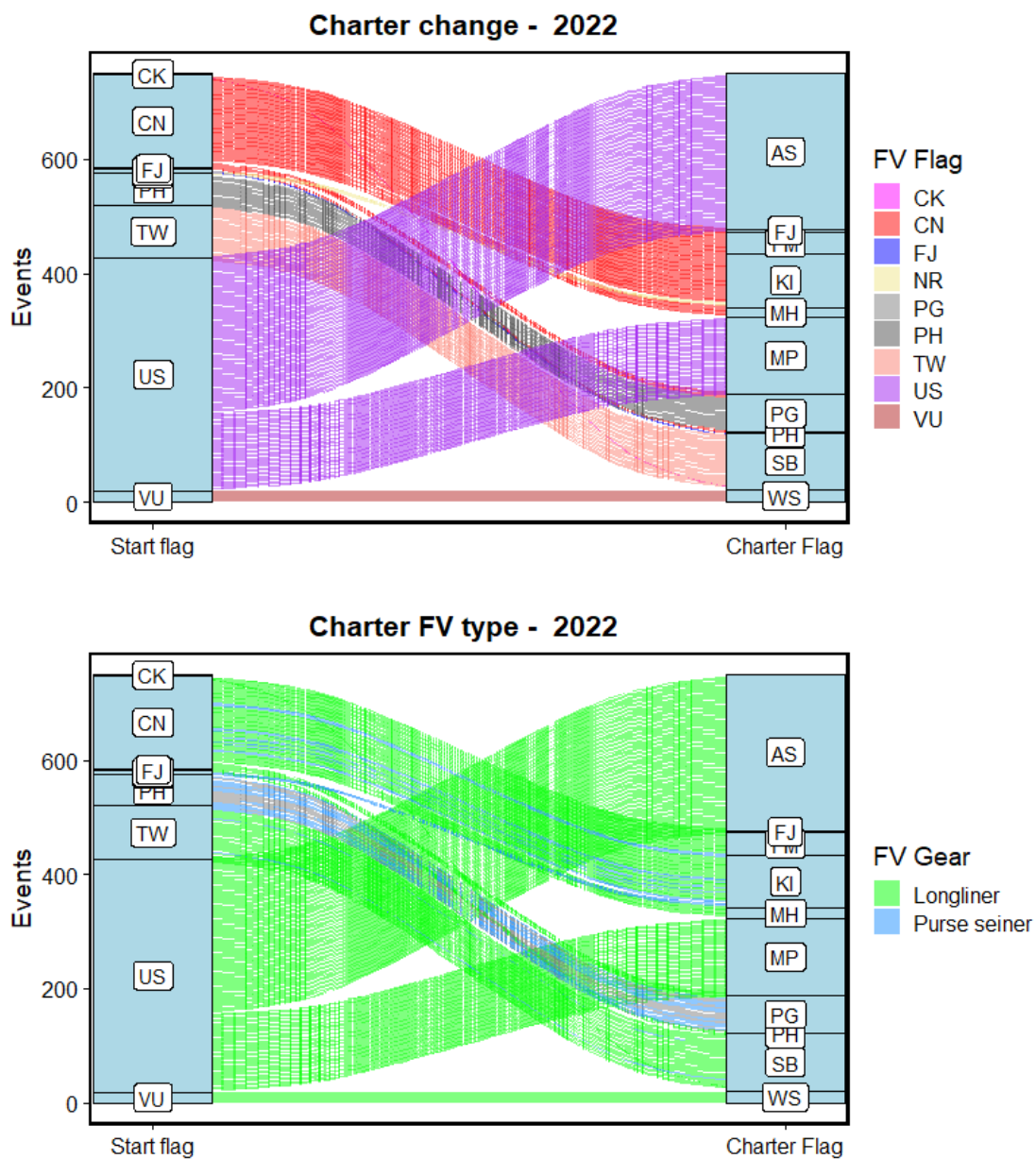


Figure 9: Change in flag through chartering from fishing vessel flag to charter flag (top) and by vessel type (bottom) in 2022.

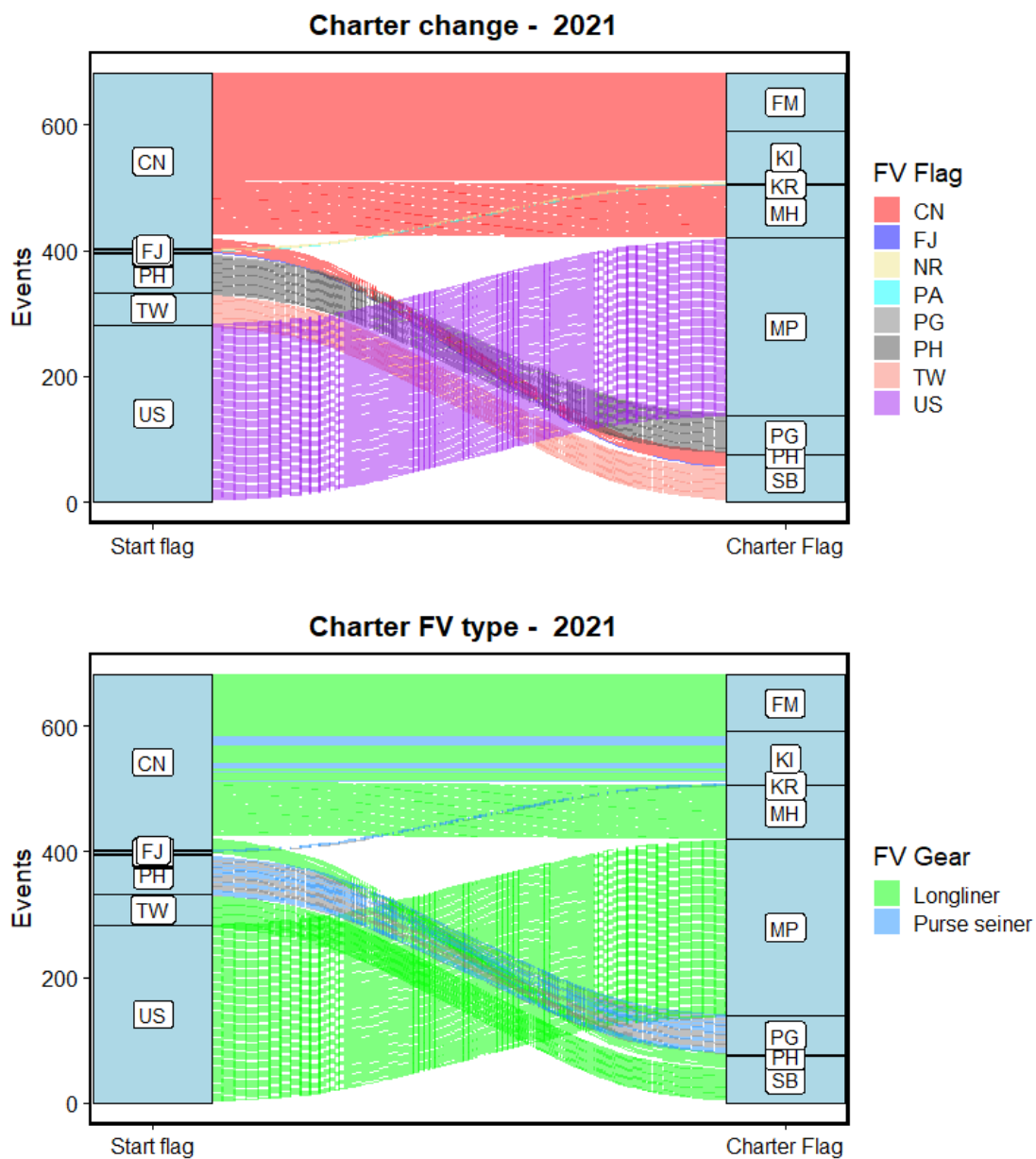


Figure 10: Change in flag through chartering from fishing vessel flag to charter flag (top) and by vessel type (bottom) in 2021.

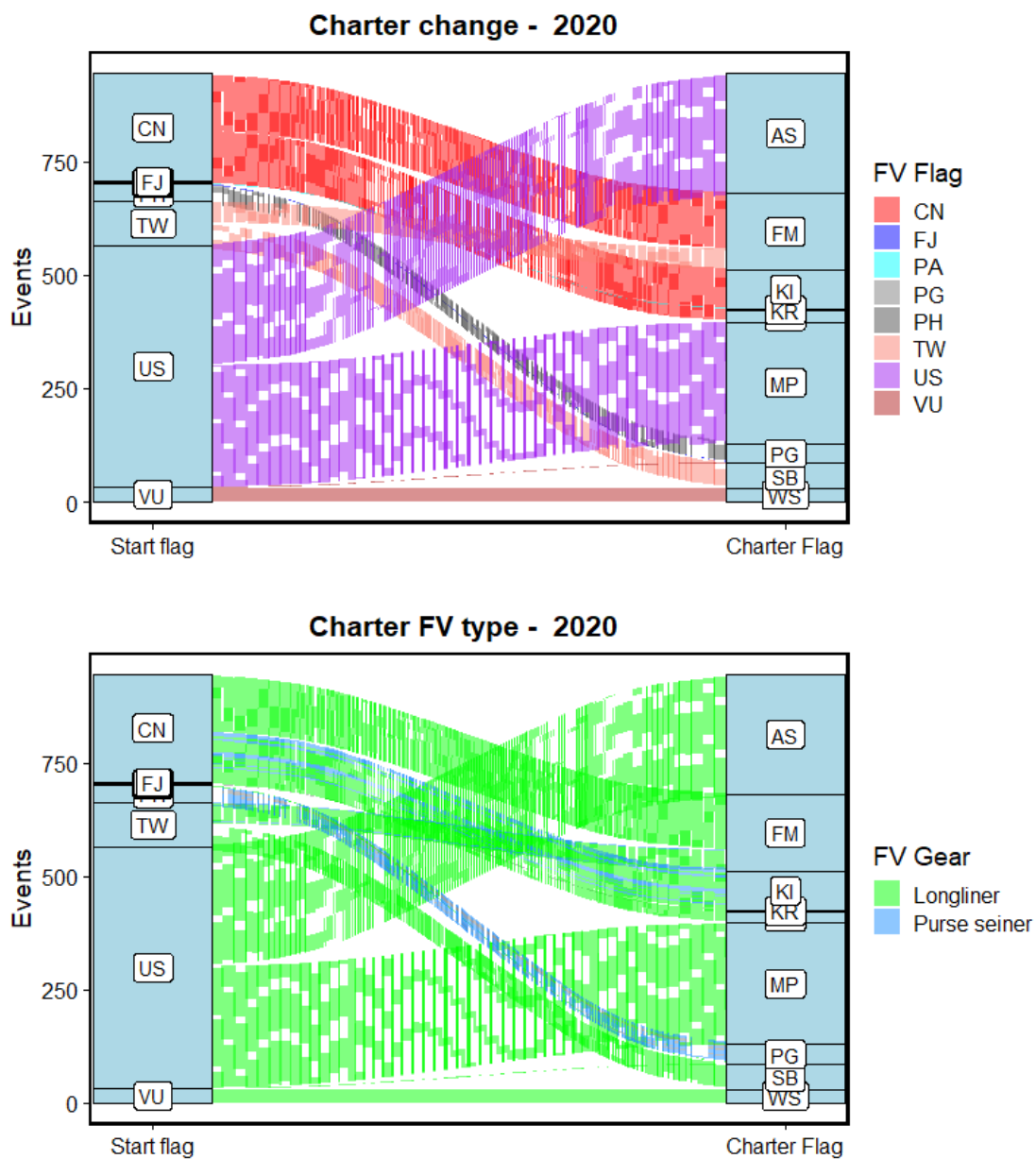


Figure 11: Change in flag through chartering from fishing vessel flag to charter flag (top) and by vessel type (bottom) in 2020.

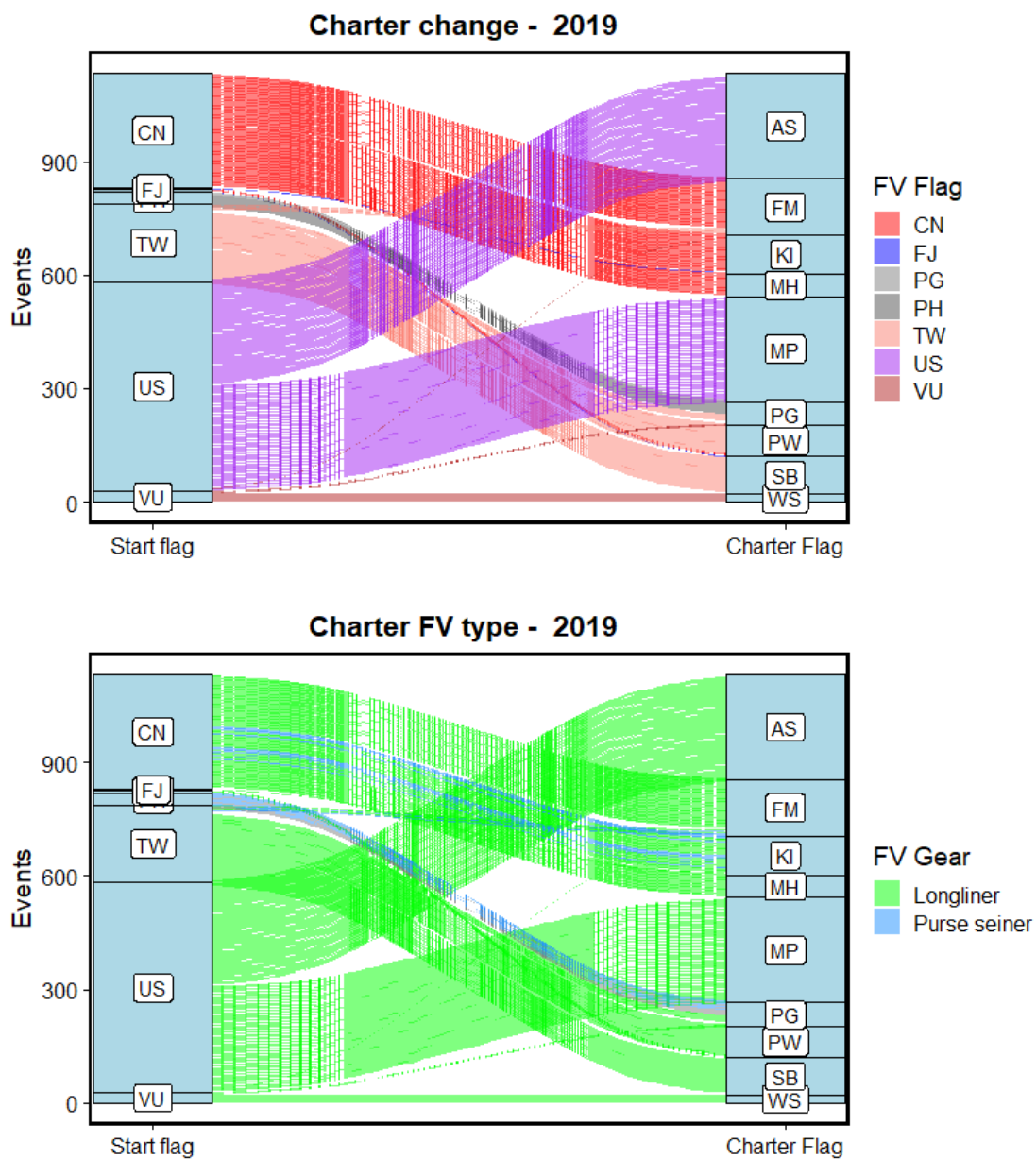


Figure 12: Change in flag through chartering from fishing vessel flag to charter flag (top) and by vessel type (bottom) in 2019.

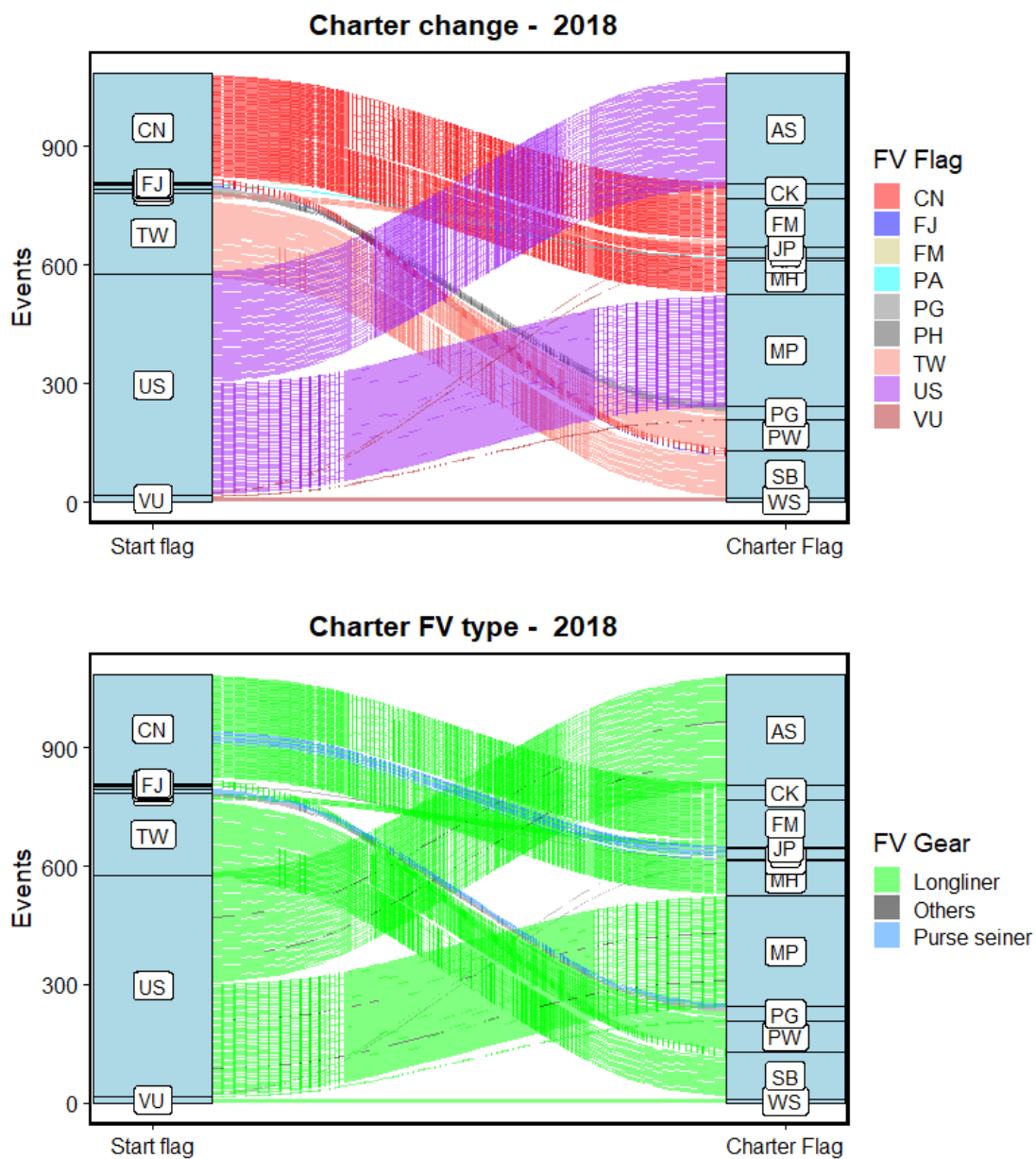


Figure 13: Change in flag through chartering from fishing vessel flag to charter flag (top) and by vessel type (bottom) in 2018.

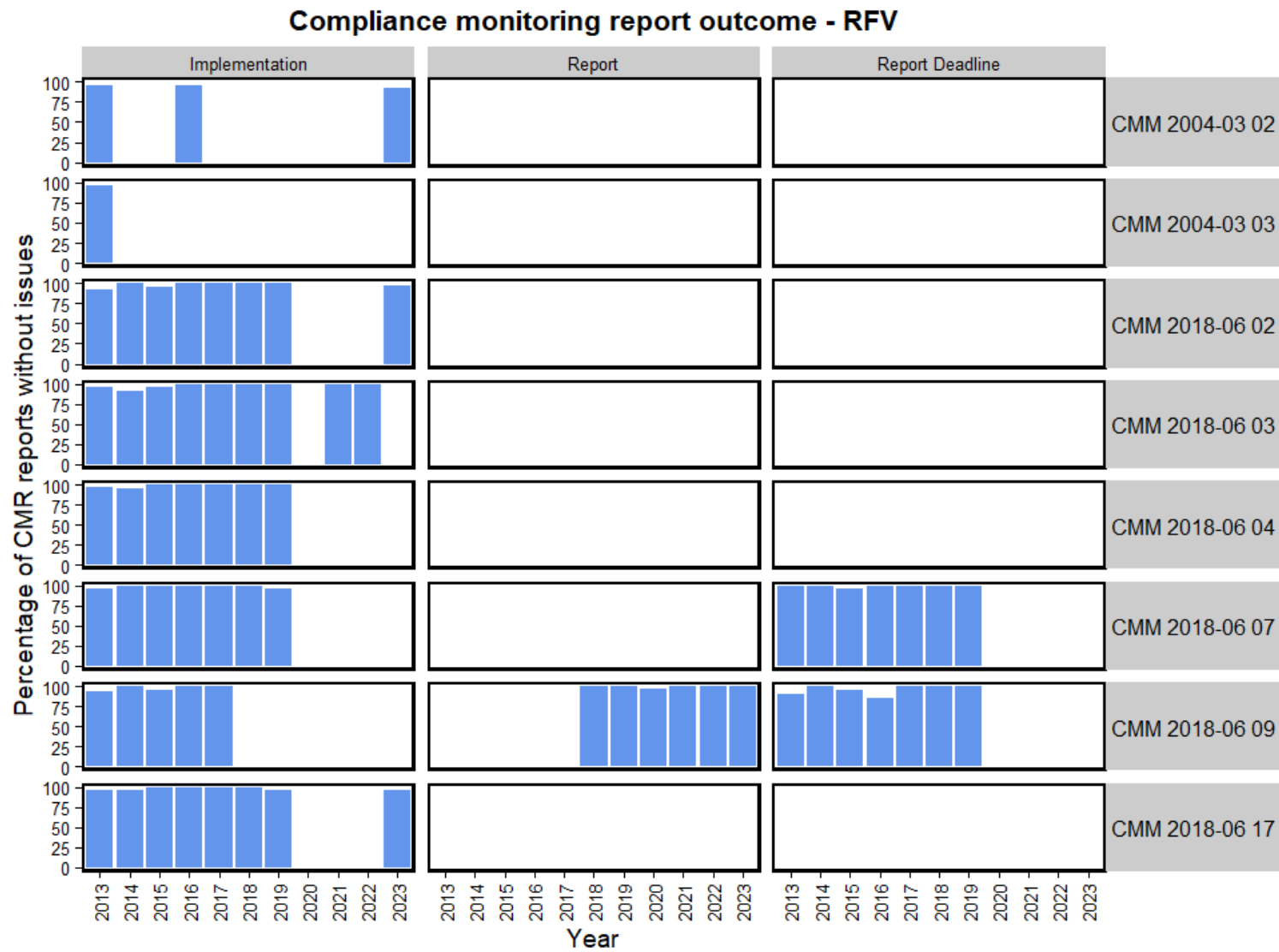


Figure 14: Summary of CMR outcomes for RFV and Charter Obligations (covering 2013 - 2023 activities).



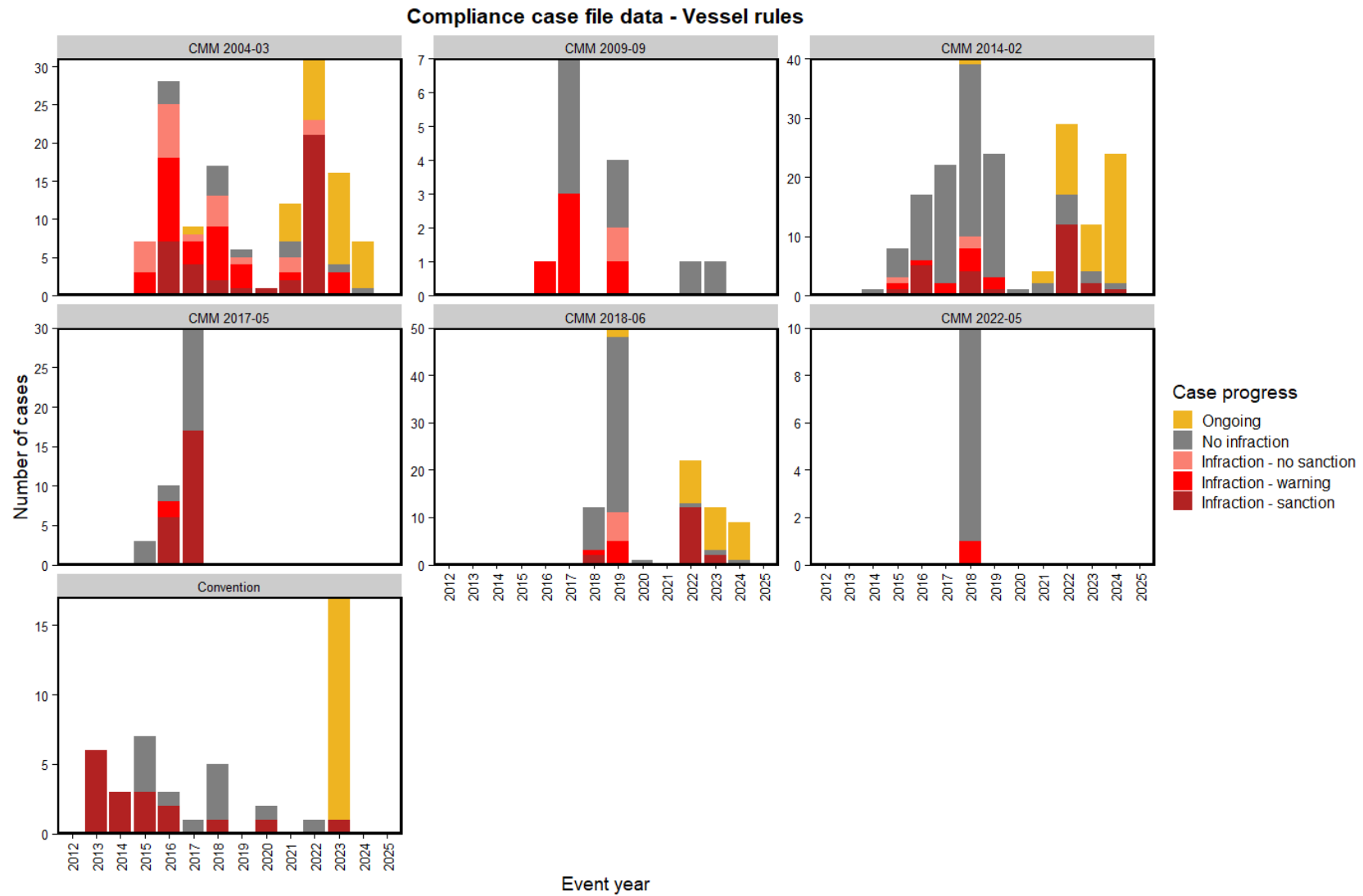


Figure 15: The outcome of alleged infringements of the vessel related CMM obligations that have been reported to WCPFC.