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Part 1: Information on fisheries, research and statistics 2025 Australia

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Technical Report
July 2026

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the continuous connection of First Nations Traditional Owners and Custodians to the lands, seas and waters of Australia. We recognise their care for and cultivation of Country. We pay respect to Elders past and present, and recognise their knowledge and contribution to the productivity, innovation and sustainability of Australia's agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries.

Contents

Summary **1**

1 Background **2**

1.1 Longline 2

1.2 Pole-and-line, purse seine and minor line 2

1.3 Recreational fishing 3

2 Flag state reporting **4**

2.1 Domestic longlining catch and effort 4

2.2 Pole-and-line, purse seine and minor line catch and effort 12

2.3 Fishing patterns 13

2.4 Fleet operations 14

2.5 Species of special interest 15

2.6 Trends in size composition of retained catch 20

3 Coastal state reporting **24**

4 Socio-economic factors **25**

5 Disposal of catch **26**

6 Onshore developments **27**

7 Future prospects for the fishery **28**

8 Status of data collection systems **29**

8.1 Logbook data collection and verification 29

8.2 Observer program 29

8.3 Port sampling program 30

8.4 Unloading/transhipment 30

8.5 Other 31

9 Research activities **32**

9.1 Biological research projects 32

9.2 Assessment-related research projects 32

9.3 Ecological research projects 34

9.4 Bycatch research projects 34

Appendix A: Common and Scientific Names **35**

Appendix B: Mandatory mitigation measures in the ETBF 2024 ..... **37**

Seabirds 37

Sea turtles 38

Circle hooks 38

De-hooking device 38

Line cutting device 38

References 39

Tables

Table 1 Annual catch and effort estimates (whole weight) for the Australian fleet, by gear and primary species, for the WCPFC Convention Area, 2021 to 2025 5

Table 2 Annual retained catch estimates (tonnes, t) of major non-target, associated and dependent species, including sharks, by the Australian fleet, by gear (longliners and other methods combined), in the WCPFC Convention Area, for 2021 to 2025 10

Table 3 Annual longline discard estimates (numbers) of major non-target, associated and dependent species, including sharks, by the Australian fleet in the WCPFC Convention Area, 2021 to 2025 11

Table 4 Effort by Australian longliners and catch by primary species, within the AFZ and on the high seas, 2021 to 2025. The percentage of catch or effort within the AFZ or on the high seas is provided in parentheses. 13

Table 5 Number of Australian vessels, by gear and size category, active in the WCPFC Convention Area, targeting WCPFC species, for 2021 to 2025 15

Table 6 Interactions with species of special interest recorded in logbooks for the Australian longline fleet in the WCPFC Convention Area, 2021 to 2025. Interactions not identifid to species level are noted as unspecified (unspec). 16

Table 7 Observed captures of species of special interest for the Australian longline fleet in the WCPFC Convention Area, 2021 to 2025. Interactions not identified to species level are noted as unspecified (unspec). 18

Table 8 Effort and observed seabird captures by fishing year for the ETBF a) south of 30°S, b) for 25°S – 30°S and c) for 23°N – 25°S. For each year, the tables provide the number of longline vessels, total number of hooks (000's), number of observed hooks (000's), observer coverage (percentage of hooks observed), number of observed captures and the capture rate (captures per thousand hooks). 19

Table 9 Number of observed seabird captures in the ETBF, 2025, by species and area 20

Table 10 Proportion of mitigation types used by the fleet 2021 to 2025 20

Table 11 Summary of longline observer coverage (by hooks) for 2024 and 2025 29

Table 12 Estimated annual coverage of operational catch and effort (logbooks), observer data (% hooks) and port sampling (% coverage rate for the 5 main target species of individual fish weights collected from processors receiving longline-caught fish in the ETBF) for the Australian fleet active in the WCPFC Convention Area, 2020 to 2025 30

Table 13 Annual catch estimates (converted whole weights) for the ETBF, 2021 to 2025, derived from catch disposal records 31

Figures

Figure 1 Historical annual vessel numbers for the Australian fleet, by gear (longline, purse seine, pole-and-line and other commercial methods [minor line including trolling, rod-and-reel and handline]) for the WCPFC Convention Area 4

Figure 2 Historical annual longline catch in the WCPFC Convention Area for (a) albacore, bigeye tuna and yellowfin tuna, as well as striped marlin and swordfish, and (b) purse-seine catch skipjack tuna . 6

Figure 3 (a–e) Annual distributions of target species catch by the Australian longline fleet active in the WCPFC Convention Area, for 2021 to 2025. 7

Figure 4 Longline effort distribution in the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (2025). Fishing footprint shows the total extent of waters fished at a spatial resolution of one degree square. 14

Figure 5 (a–e) Time series of 4-quarter and 8-quarter running means from 1997 to 2025, by quarter, of processed fish weight (in kg) of a) albacore, b) bigeye tuna, c) yellowfin tuna, d) striped marlin and e) swordfish sampled across the entire ETBF based on the data collected from the port sampling program 21

Summary

Australian commercial fisheries for highly migratory species in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Convention Area are managed as part of the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF; a mainly longline fishery with a smaller minor line component) and the Eastern Skipjack Fishery (ESF; a purse-seine fishery). Most fishing occurs in the longline sector of the ETBF and, as such, this is the primary focus of the annual report.

Total catches of WCPFC species of interest reported in logbooks for the ETBF decreased from 4,206 t (including <1 t minor line) in 2024 to 3,651 t (including <1 t minor line) in 2025. This is a decline from a peak of 8,229 t in 2002. Longline fishing effort in the ETBF has fallen from a peak of 12.40 million hooks in 2003 to 8.4 million total hooks in 2025. Of this, 8.4 million hooks, 99.8% of effort, was within the Australian exclusive economic zone (EEZ). A further 0.2% of effort occurred in high-seas areas adjacent to the Australian EEZ. Thirty-nine Australian vessels reported longlining in the WCPFC Convention Area during 2025.

The ETBF is a multi-species fishery, targeting albacore, bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna and swordfish. The profitability and viability of the fishery is dependent on this suite of species, each of which fluctuate in availability in the Australian region through time. Longline logbook catch of albacore increased from 544 t in 2024 to 659 t in 2025. Longline catch of bigeye tuna increased from 275 t in 2024 to 279 t in 2025. Longline catch of yellowfin tuna decreased from 2,426 t in 2024 to 1,838 t in 2025. Longline catch of swordfish decreased from 658 t in 2024 to 650 t in 2025. Due to increasing catches, Pacific bluefin tuna has been included in this report. Longline catches of Pacific bluefin tuna decreased from 26.3 t in 2024 to 25.8 t in 2025.

In 2025, there were 6 dedicated minor line (rod-and-reel) vessels actively targeting WCPFC species of interest using minor line in the ETBF. Most minor line catches are reported by vessels (e.g. longline vessels) on their way to and from the primary fishing grounds. The number of vessels reporting using minor line has decreased in the ETBF from a peak of 52 vessels in 2001. There were no vessels active in the Eastern Skipjack Fishery (purse seine) in 2025.

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) observer program began deploying observers on domestic longliners in 2001, initially as part of a program to test the efficacy of seabird mitigation devices. From July 2003, observers were deployed more broadly across the fishery with the aim of collecting additional fishery data, including information on fishing gear and the size and species composition of catches. E-monitoring of the fishery became compulsory from 1 July 2015 for vessels operating within the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone. As a minimum, 10% of the hauls are reviewed and used to acquit information provided in logbooks. The total number of longline hooks observed from the e-monitoring system in 2025 was 692,507, which is 8.2% of the hooks deployed.

The AFMA Commission agreed on the total allowable commercial catches (TACCs) for the ETBF. These apply to the 2025 season which commenced on 1 January 2025. The TACCs for the five main target species are: albacore (2,500 t); bigeye tuna (1,056 t); swordfish (1,047 t); striped marlin (351 t); and yellowfin tuna (2,400 t).

1 Background

Australian commercial fisheries for highly migratory species in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Convention Area are managed as part of the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF) (a mainly longline fishery with a small minor line component) and Eastern Skipjack Fishery (a purse-seine fishery). Scientific and common names of relevant species are provided in Appendix A.

1.1 Longline

Japanese longliners began fishing off Australia's east coast in the late 1950s. Sporadic domestic longlining for yellowfin tuna commenced soon after, in the early 1960s. The declaration of the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ) in 1979 resulted in Japanese longliners being licensed to fish in Australian waters under bilateral agreements. In the early 1980s, longlining increased markedly after successful air-freighting of fresh-chilled tuna to Japan. In the 1990s, effort expanded in the waters off northern Queensland, resulting in high catch rates of yellowfin and bigeye tuna.

In the mid-1990s, improved access to swordfish markets in the United States of America prompted many ETBF fishers to move to southern Queensland ports such as Mooloolaba to target swordfish. Japanese longliners were excluded from the AFZ from 1997. Longlining for swordfish has declined since early 2005 because of high fuel and bait costs, the introduction of a competitive total allowable catch (TAC) in 2006 (now an individual transferable quota system), and changes in the currency exchange rate.

The Securing our Fishing Future structural adjustment package (between 2005 and 2006) likely increased the exit of less-efficient vessels from the fishery. However, the number of longline vessels was already declining from a peak of 152 vessels in 1999. By 2007, 58 longline vessels remained, and in 2025 a total of 39 longline vessels were active.

Management through total allowable commercial catch (TACC) limits and individual transferable quotas (ITQs) commenced in 2011. Quota species are albacore, bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, swordfish and striped marlin. The level of latency in the ETBF, measured by the proportion of TACC not caught in the fishery, has varied across the key species since the shift to quota-based management in 2011. This is to be expected in a multi-species fishery, noting that latency is driven by a range of factors including catch-per-unit-effort, input costs, fish price and market access.

1.2 Pole-and-line, purse seine and minor line

The pole-and-line fishery expanded rapidly in the 1950s with the introduction of live-bait-and-pole techniques for southern bluefin tuna and sporadic catches of skipjack and yellowfin tuna. Pole-and-line fishing decreased in the late-1990s with little to no fishing by Australian fleets in the WCPFC Convention Area since then. The introduction of purse seining in the 1970s also increased catches. After peaking at 7,000 t in the early 1990s, purse-seine effort and catches of skipjack have decreased dramatically, with zero to very low effort and catches in recent years, although there is industry interest in re-invigorating the fishery. Minor line effort has been decreasing in the fishery over time, with a peak number of vessels in 2001 (52). There were 6 dedicated minor-line vessels that operated in the ETBF in 2025.

1.3 Recreational fishing

Recreational and charter anglers have taken tuna and billfish off eastern Australia since the early 1900s. During the 1970s, recreational vessels capable of operating offshore became more readily available and angling for tuna and billfish grew in popularity. The continental shelf extends less than 8 natuical miles (nm) offshore in some places along the southeast coast of Australia, allowing anglers to fish for tuna from shore at several locations. The Game Fishing Association of Australia (GFAA) was formed in 1938 and has a membership of several thousand anglers, most based on the east coast of Australia. Many gamefishers tag and release much of their catch, especially marlins.

2 Flag state reporting

2.1 Domestic longlining catch and effort

Unless otherwise stated, all catch and effort levels in this report are derived from those reported in AFMA logbooks. Thirty-nine vessels in the Australian fleet reported longlining in the WCPFC Convention Area during 2025, down from a peak of 180 in 1997 (Figure 1). Total longline effort increased from 8.1 million hooks in 2024 to 8.4 million hooks in 2025 (Table 1). Overall, effort has declined from the peak effort of 12.40 million hooks deployed in 2003. This decline was mainly the result of the strength of the Australian dollar, increased operating costs, the surrender of permits under the structural adjustment component of the Australian Government Securing Our Fishing Future package, the introduction of hook limits in 2009 and the introduction of individual transferrable quota management in 2011. The number of vessels in 2025 fishing for striped marlin south of 15°S was 35. Thirty-seven vessels fished for albacore and 36 vessels fished for swordfish south of 20°S. There was no fishing north of the equator in 2025.

Figure 1 Historical annual vessel numbers for the Australian fleet, by gear (longline, purse seine, pole-and-line and other commercial methods [minor line including trolling, rod-and-reel and handline]) for the WCPFC Convention Area

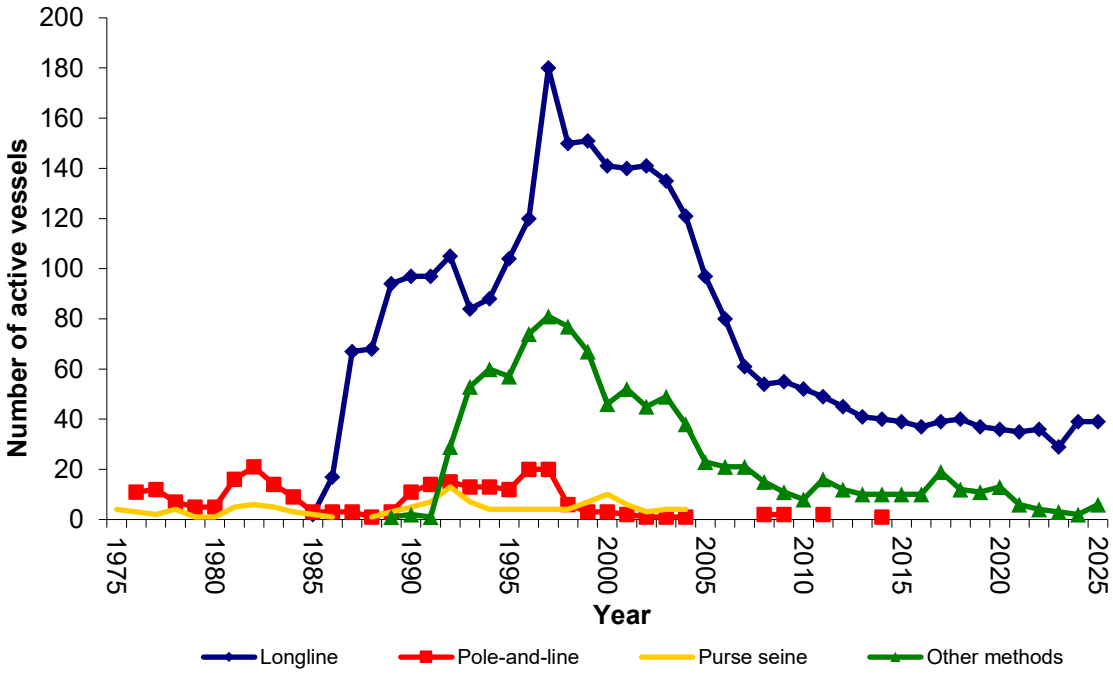


Table 1 Annual catch and effort estimates (whole weight) for the Australian fleet, by gear and primary species, for the WCPFC Convention Area, 2021 to 2025

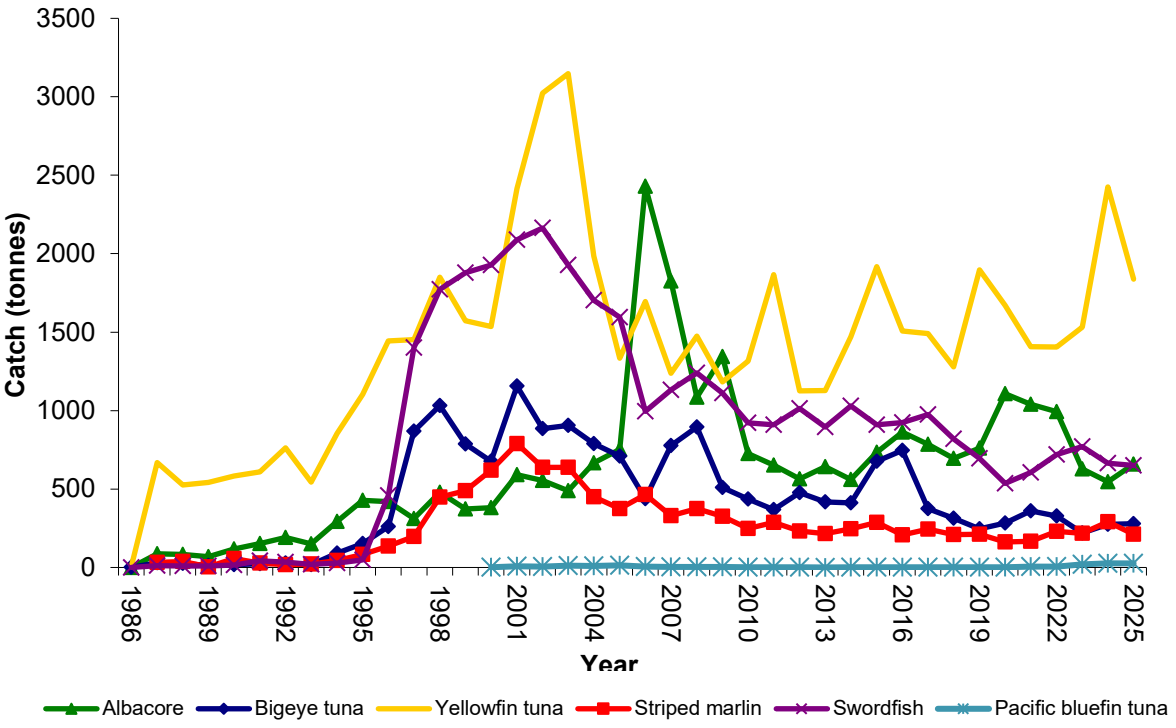
Fishing method	Year	Effort [a]	Primary species (t)						
			Albacore	Bigeye	Skipjack	Yellowfin	Striped marlin	Swordfish	Pacific bluefin tuna
Total	2021	-	1040.4	361.0	2.3	1406.7	166.6	604.4	5.3
	2022	-	993.4	328.8	14.7	1405.4	230.1	719.3	4.9
	2023	-	626.8	219.8	4.25	1531.6	217.0	770.7	19.9
	2024	-	545.3	275.4	16.2	2,425.6	291.7	664.3	26.3
	2025	-	658.8	278.8	14.2	1837.5	211.8	649.9	25.8
Longline	2021	7792	1040.9	361.0	2.3	1406.8	166.6	604.4	5.3
	2022	6923	993.1	328.8	14.7	1405.4	230.1	719.3	4.9
	2023	7338	626.8	219.8	4.25	1531.6	217.0	770.7	19.9
	2024	8065	545.3	275.4	16.2	2425.6	291.7	664.3	26.3
	2025	8371	658.8	278.8	14.2	1837.5	211.8	649.9	25.8
Purse seine	2021	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2023	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2024	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2025	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

a Longline–number of hooks (000's); purse seine–search hours.
Note: Catch data are from logbooks. Australia is currently reviewing catch estimation methods and therefore values reported here may be amended in future reports. Due to recent increasing catches, Pacific bluefin tuna has been included in the table.

Total longline catches of WCPFC species of interest in the ETBF reported in logbooks decreased from 4,206 t in 2024 to 3,651 t in 2025. This is down from a peak of 8,229 t in 2002. Historical catches for the Australian fleet in the WCPFC Convention Area, by primary species, are shown in Figure 2.Longline catches of albacore increased from 545 t in 2024 to 659 t in 2025 (618 t caught south of 20°S). Longline catches of bigeye tuna increased from 275 t in 2024 to 279 t in 2025. Longline catches of yellowfin tuna decreased from 2,426 t in 2024 to 1,838 t in 2025. Longline catches of swordfish decreased from 664 t in 2024 to 650 t in 2025 (618 t caught south of 20°S). Longline catch of striped marlin decreased from 292 t in 2024 to 212 t in 2025 (205 t caught south of 15°S in 2025). Longline catches of skipjack decreased from 16 t in 2024 to 14 t in 2025. Longline catches of Pacific bluefin tuna decreased from 26.3 t in 2024 to 25.8 t in 2025. Annual catch distributions of the main target species by the Australian longline fleet for 2021 to 2025 are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 2 Historical annual longline catch in the WCPFC Convention Area for (a) albacore, bigeye tuna and yellowfin tuna, as well as striped marlin, swordfish and Pacific bluefin tuna, and (b) purse-seine catch skipjack tuna

a)



Note: Logbook catches for Pacific bluefin tuna only available from 2000.

b)

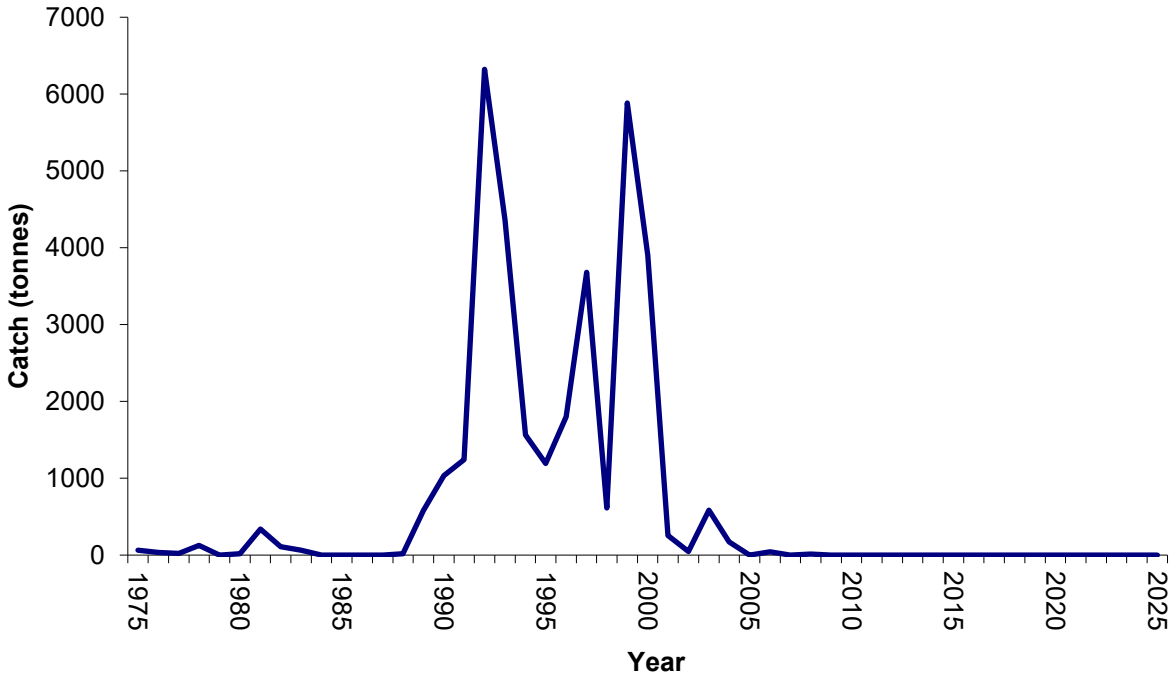
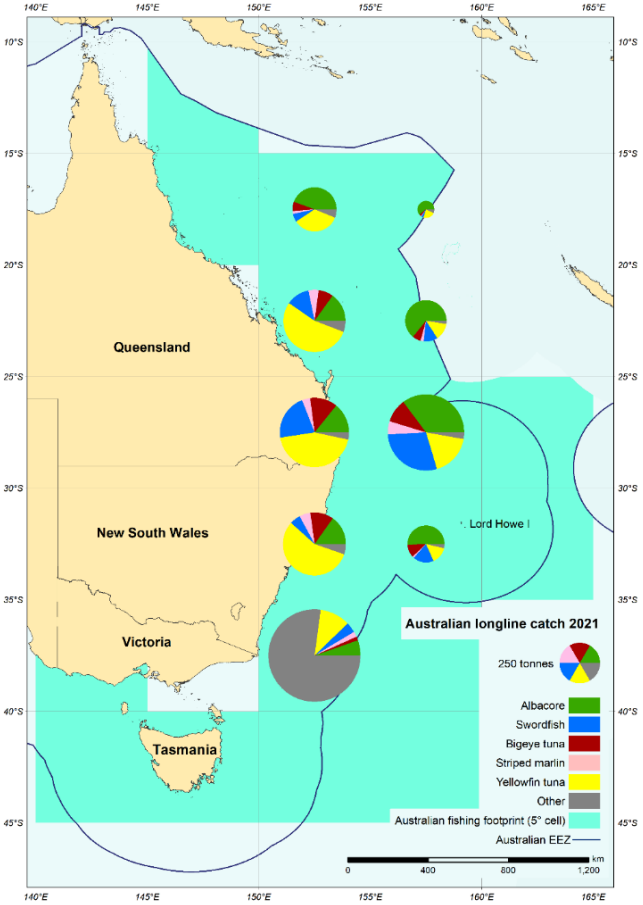


Figure 3 (a–e) Annual distributions of target species catch by the Australian longline fleet active in the WCPFC Convention Area, for 2021 to 2025.

a)



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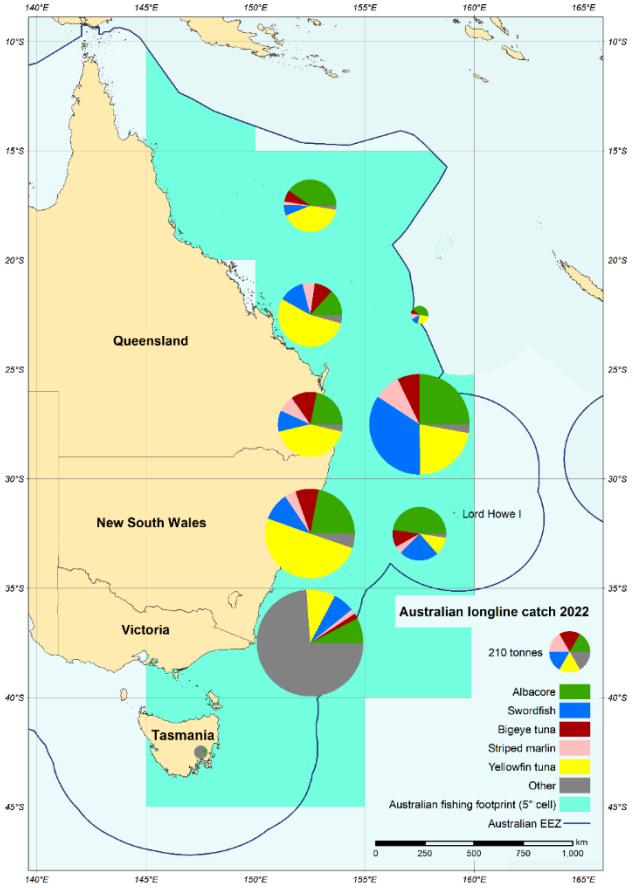
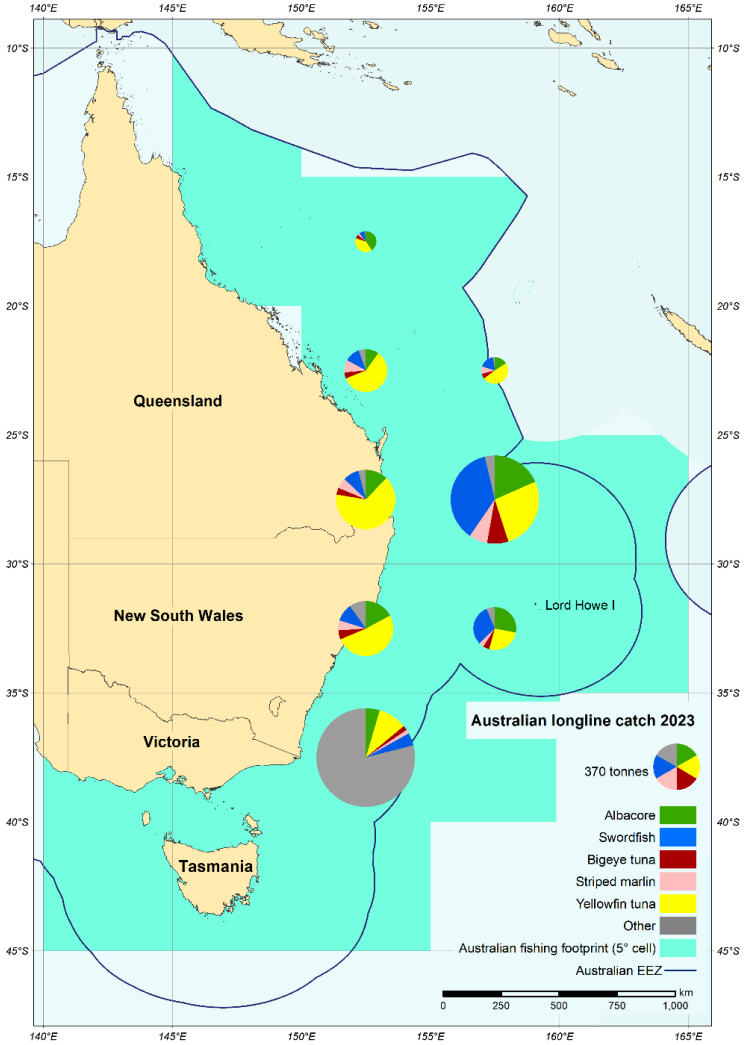
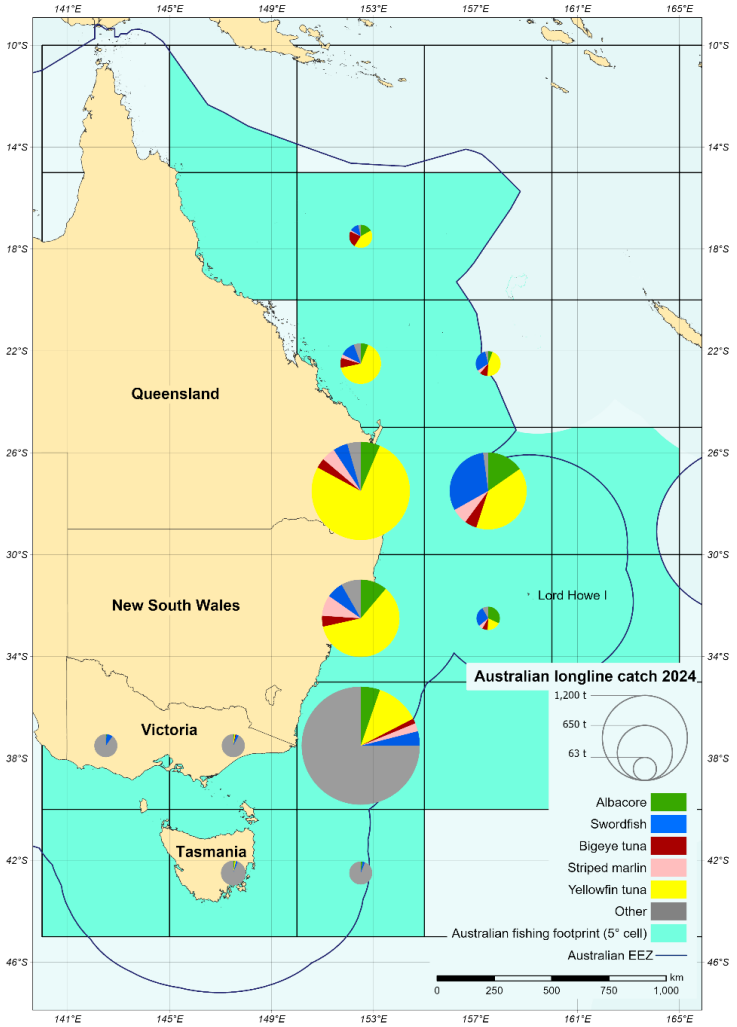


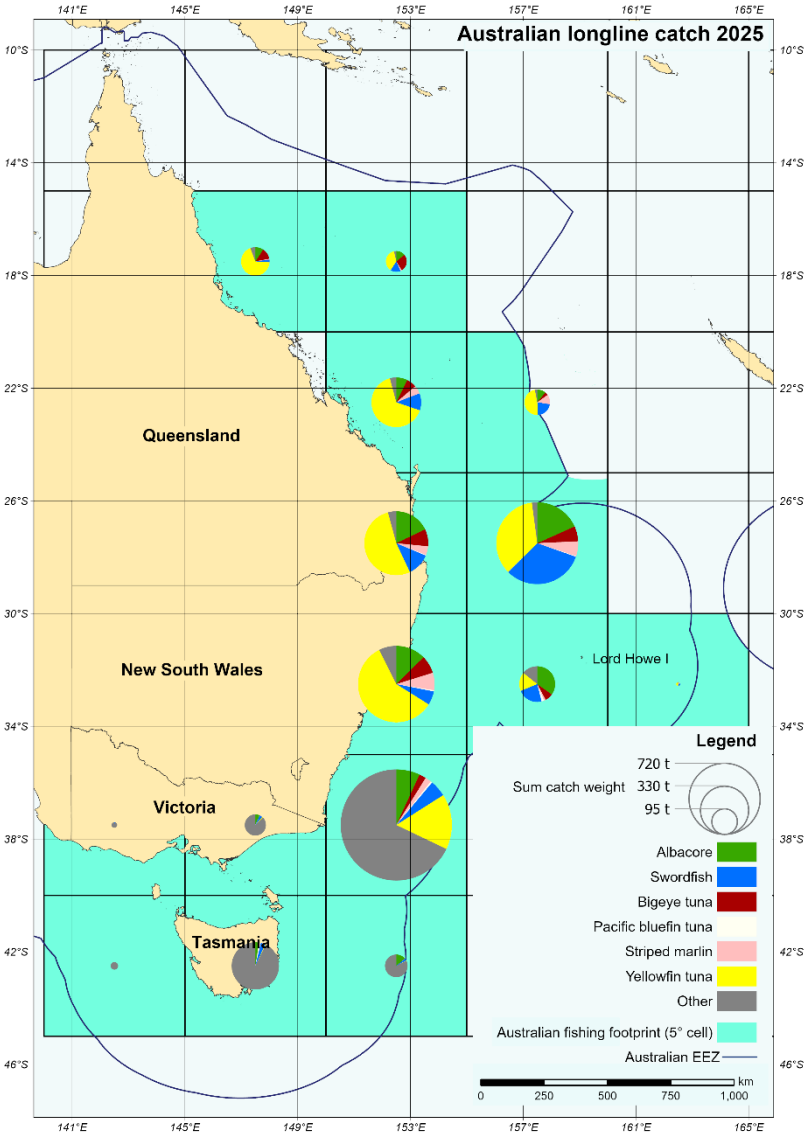
c)


Queensland
New South Wales
Victoria
Tasmania
Lord Howe I
Australian longline catch 2023
370 tonnes
Albacore
Swordfish
Bigeye tuna
Striped marlin
Yellowfin tuna
Other
Australian fishing footprint (5° cell)
Australian EEZ
km
0 250 500 750 1,000

d)


Queensland
New South Wales
Victoria
Tasmania
Lord Howe I
Australian longline catch 2024
1,200 t
650 t
63 t
Albacore
Swordfish
Bigeye tuna
Striped marlin
Yellowfin tuna
Other
Australian fishing footprint (5° cell)
Australian EEZ
km
0 250 500 750 1,000

e)



Note: Catches have been aggregated to 5-degree blocks to address issues of confidentiality. The diameter of the pie chart in each grid cell is proportional to the total catch of that grid cell. The diameter to catch relationship is provided in the legend. The pie charts also show the proportions of catch of each of the target species. The segments of the pie chart in the legend are for illustrative purposes only. Fishing footprint shows the total extent of waters fished at a spatial resolution of 5-degree square. Prior to 2025, Pacific bluefin tuna catch was included in 'Other' category. From 2025 onwards, Pacific bluefin tuna is included as a separate category. The 2024 and 2025 map was created using ArcGIS Pro 3.2. Maps from previous years were created using ArcGSI Desktop 10.8.2 and previous versions.

Annual retained catch estimates of major non-target, associated and dependent species, including sharks, by the Australian longline fleet from 2021 to 2025 are presented in Table 2. Estimates of releases derived from logbooks are in Table 3. From July of 2015, the logbooks of the Australian longline fleet were subject to potential verification through e-monitoring coverage. This has resulted in a rise in the levels of discards reported in logbooks since 2016 (Table 3).

Since 1 January 2013, retention of oceanic whitetip sharks by all commercial vessels has been prohibited and no retention was recorded in logbooks in 2025 (Table 2), while 1,260 were reported as discarded in logbooks (Table 3). Of the 19 oceanic whitetips observed caught in 2025, 9 were released alive, and 10 were released in an undetermined condition.

Table 2 Annual retained catch estimates (tonnes, t) of major non-target, associated and dependent species, including sharks, by the Australian fleet, by gear (longliners and other methods combined), in the WCPFC Convention Area, for 2021 to 2025

Group	Species	Longline (t)					Other methods (t)				
		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Scalefish	Escolar	0.3	0.0	3.0	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Lancetfish	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Mahi mahi	54.7	37.4	56.9	112.7	61.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Moonfish	33.4	8.8	2.9	2.0	2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Ocean sunfish	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Oilfish	0.6	0.5	1.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Ray's bream	8.5	11.9	6.7	9.8	7.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Rudderfish	11.0	15.6	15.3	5.2	5.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Sailfish	1.7	1.3	0.7	1.2	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Shortbill spearfish	4.6	5.9	6.2	4.3	4.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Wahoo	12.8	11.7	17.3	12.3	11.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Subtotal	**127.6**	**93.1**	**110.1**	**147.8**	**94.4**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**
Sharks	Blacktip shark	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Blue shark	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Bronze whaler	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Dusky shark	0.0	0.1	0.7	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Hammerhead	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Longfin mako	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Oceanic whitetip	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Porbeagle	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Shortfin mako	12.9	15.2	13.2	11.2	8.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0
	Silky shark	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Thresher shark	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Tiger shark	0.0	1.5	6.7	4.1	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Whale shark	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Subtotal	**12.9**	**17.0**	**20.7**	**17.1**	**9.3**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.2**	**0.0**
	TOTAL	**140.5**	**110.1**	**130.8**	**164.9**	**103.7**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.2**	**0.0**

Table 3 Annual longline discard estimates (numbers) of major non-target, associated and dependent species, including sharks, by the Australian fleet in the WCPFC Convention Area, 2021 to 2025

Group	Species	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Scalefish	Black marlin	1,510	633	1,157	1,376	1,186
	Blue marlin	1,284	1,546	1,562	2,140	2,105
	Escolar	542	585	148	49	8
	Lancetfish	21,801	16,018	17,415	15,754	16,478
	Mahi mahi	577	411	538	635	726
	Moonfish	40	237	121	10	16
	Ocean sunfish	5,855	4,193	5,000	6,008	1,699
	Oilfish	866	1,326	1,134	397	664
	Ray's bream	68	238	143	127	188
	Rudderfish	4,041	5,443	5,157	2,734	2,373
	Sailfish	73	19	8	9	10
	Shortbill spearfish	102	209	125	195	342
	Wahoo	93	57	78	48	71
	Subtotal	**36,852**	**30,915**	**32,586**	**29,482**	**25,869**
Sharks	Blacktip sharks	0	0	102	38	4
	Blue shark	23,317	20,704	28,473	32,724	52,547
	Bronze whaler	11,580	3,594	3,801	3,561	5,300
	Dusky shark	333	211	270	285	207
	Hammerhead	440	142	251	273	349
	Longfin mako	0	0	1	1	0
	Oceanic whitetip	1,650	742	926	1,878	1,260
	Porbeagle	0	0	0	0	0
	Shortfin mako	1,090	516	603	609	470
	Silky shark	60	0	0	0	0
	Thresher shark	931	621	660	1,267	790
	Tiger shark	1,770	1,447	756	2,057	1,063
	Whale shark	0	0	0	0	0
	Subtotal	**41,297**	**27,982**	**35,869**	**42,403**	**62,000**
	TOTAL	**78,149**	**58,867**	**68,455**	**71,885**	**87,869**

Since 1 July 2014, retention of silky sharks has been prohibited. None were recorded as either retained (Table 2) or discarded (Table 3) in logbooks in 2025. In the 2025 calendar year, no silky sharks were observed caught in the ETBF.

Since 14 September 2014 hammerhead sharks must be reported by species under CITES listings. For the purposes of this report, however, we have continued to group hammerheads into a single group for consistency in data presentation.

The 19th CITES Conference of Parties (Panama, November 2022) adopted proposals to list all species of hammerhead sharks (Family Sphyrnidae), guitarfishes (Family Rhinobatidae) and requiem sharks (Family Carcharinidae) in Appendix II. The listings for guitarfish and hammerhead sharks took effect from 23 February 2023, while the listing for requiem sharks took effect from 25 November 2023.

Following these CITES listings, a positive CITES non-detriment finding must be made by Australia's CITES Scientific Authority certifying that the harvest of the species will not be detrimental to survival of these species in the wild. Overall, 34 species were considered for a non-detriment finding, based on expert scientific advice (DCCEEW 2023). The findings for all the species considered indicated that current levels of harvest were sustainable and therefore a non-detriment finding was appropriate, some additional recommendations were made for some species.

Further information on the non-detriment finding and the scientific advice for each species is available.

Further restrictions on shark catches in the ETBF can be found in the management arrangements booklet.

Retention of both blue marlin and black marlin by commercial longliners has been prohibited since 1998 and no retention was recorded in logbooks in 2025, while 1,189 black marlin and 2,105 blue marlin were reported as discarded (Table 3). The vast majority of the catch and effort by Australian longliners has been within the AFZ, with little effort on the adjacent high seas (Table 4).

2.2 Pole-and-line, purse seine and minor line catch and effort

In 2025, there were no active purse-seine vessels in the Eastern Skipjack Fishery and no interactions with whale sharks were recorded (CMM 2019-04). Total minor-line catches of WCPFC species of interest in the ETBF (including pole and line, trolling, rod-and-reel and handline) was <1 t in 2025. The only catch of target species was albacore (0.01 t). The number of vessels reporting using minor line in the ETBF has steadily decreased from a peak of 52 vessels in 2001 to 6 in 2025 (using rod-and-reel). Minor-line effort peaked in 2007 with 975 lines.

Table 4 Effort by Australian longliners and catch by primary species, within the AFZ and on the high seas, 2021 to 2025. The percentage of catch or effort within the AFZ or on the high seas is provided in parentheses.

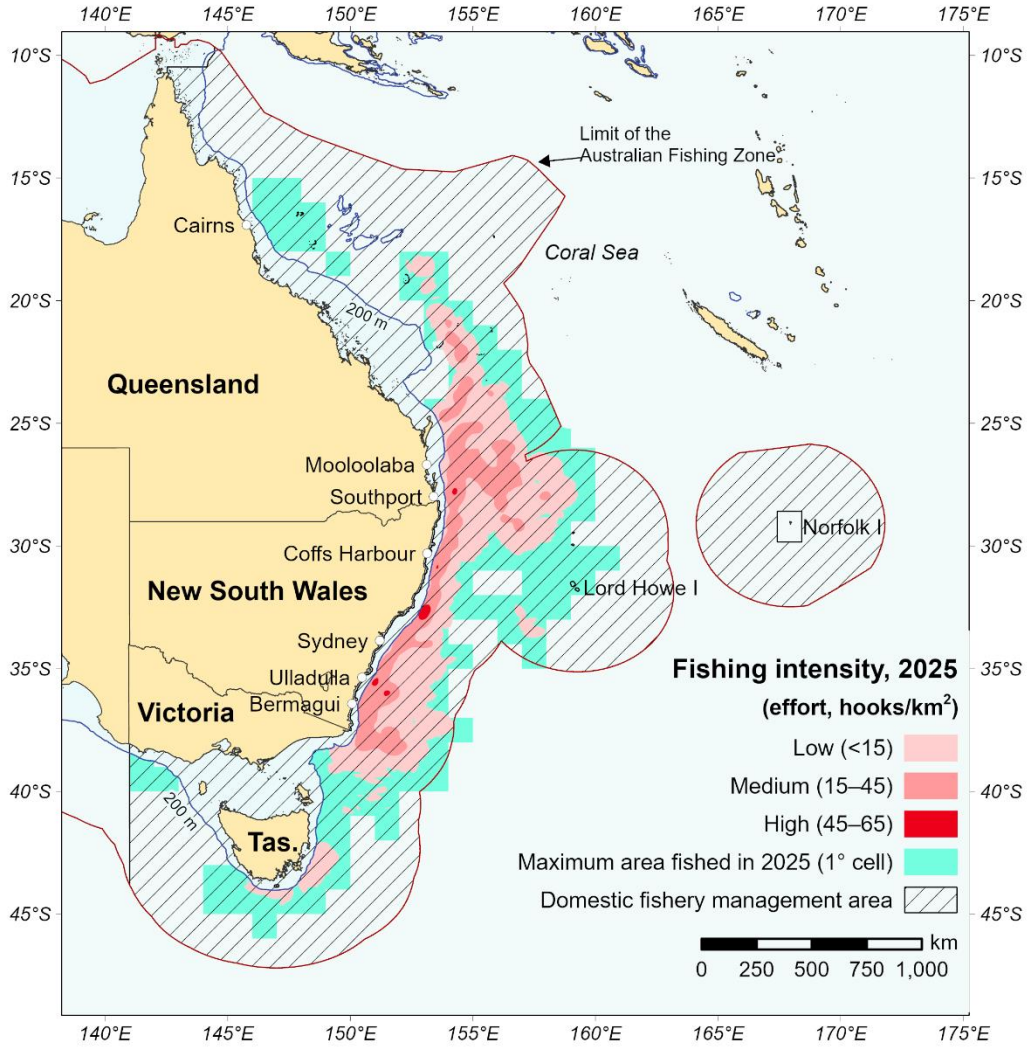
	Year	Effort ('000 hooks)	Primary species catch (t)						
			Albacore	Bigeye	Skipjack	Yellowfin	Striped marlin	Swordfish	Pacific bluefin
Within AFZ	2021	7,764	1,032	363.1	2.4	1,434	170.3	609.4	5.3
		(99.7%)	(99.9%)	(100%)	(100%)	(99.9%)	(100%)	(99.9%)	(100%)
	2022	6,891	988.4	327.9	14.7	1,382	228.4	712.1	4.9
		(99.6%)	(99.9%)	(99.9%)	(99.9%)	(99.9%)	(99.8%)	(99.7%)	(100%)
	2023	7,272	626.1	217.6	4.2	1,519	213.3	763.0	19.7
		(99.1%)	(99.3%)	(98.3%)	(99.3%)	(98.9%)	(99.3%)	(97.8%)	(99.0%)
	2024	8,016	538.8	269.1	15.4	2,347	288.1	646.4	26.0
		(99.4%)	(99.6%)	(99.3%)	(99.9%)	(99.4%)	(99.5%)	(98.7%)	(99.1%)
	2025	8,311	651.3	271.9	13.7	1,767.7	200.0	625.5	25.3
		(99.8 %)	(99.9%)	(99.9%)	(99.9%)	(99.9%)	(99.9%)	(99.9%)	(99.5%)
High seas	2021	10.9	1	0	0	0.6	0	0.1	0
		(0.1%)	(0.1%)	(0%)	(0%)	(<0.1%)	(0%)	(<0.1%)	(100%)
	2022	13.4	0.4	0.3	0.01	0.5	0.4	1.5	0
		(0.2%)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(0.1%)	(0.1%)	(0.2%)	(0.2%)	(0%)
	2023	63.5	4.4	3.8	0.03	10.2	2.7	16.8	0.21
		(0.9%)	(0.7%)	(1.7%)	(1.3%)	(1.1%)	(1.3%)	(2.2%)	(1.0%)
	2024	43.6	2.2	1.8	0.00	12.3	0.33	8.8	0.25
		(0.5%)	(0.8%)	(0.7%)	(0.1%)	(0.6%)	(0.5%)	(1.3%)	(0.9%)
	2025	9.7	0.52	0.16	0	1.4	0.12	0.94	0.13
		(0.1 %)	(0.1%)	(0.1%)	(0.1%)	(0.1%)	(0.1%)	(0.1%)	(0.5%)

Note: Due to recent increasing catches, Pacific bluefin tuna has been included in the table.

2.3 Fishing patterns

Fishing patterns vary with target species, location and season. The management area of the ETBF extends from Cape York, at the northern tip of Queensland, to the border between Victoria and South Australia, including waters around Tasmania (Figure 4). In the WCPFC Convention Area, skipjack tuna are fished from southern New South Wales to north-eastern Tasmania.

Figure 4 Longline effort distribution in the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (2025). Fishing footprint shows the total extent of waters fished at a spatial resolution of one degree square.



2.4 Fleet operations

Domestic longlining vessels are mostly 15–25 m long and use monofilament gear (Table 5). Vessels usually conduct one longline operation per day, or night, depending on the target species. A typical longline set will comprise about 1,400+ hooks. Fishers commonly operate around 150 days per year. Most trips are between 2 and 15 days and typically range from 40–300 nm from port with effort mostly concentrated on the edge of the continental shelf (seaward of 200 m depth) but extending much further eastward off Mooloolaba (Figure 4). The catch is gilled and gutted (depending on species) and stored on ice, in ice slurry or in refrigerated brine.

Historically, most purse-seiners were 20–25 m long, but several were 40–45 m. Most poling vessels were 15–20 m long. Most minor-line catches are reported by vessels (e.g. longline vessels) on their way to and from fishing grounds.

Table 5 Number of Australian vessels, by gear and size category, active in the WCPFC Convention Area, targeting WCPFC species, for 2021 to 2025

Year	Longline				Purse seine	Pole-and-line	Troll	Rod-and-reel	Total
Vessel size (GRT)	≤50	51–200	201–500	Subtotal	≤500	0–50	Unknown	Unknown	
2021	9	25	1	35	0	0	2	3	41[a]
2022	8	26	2	36	0	0	1	3	40
2023	6	26	2	34	0	0	0	2	37[b]
2024	7	30	2	39	1	0	1	1	42
2025	6	31	2	39	0	0	0	6	45

GRT Gross registered tonnes**.**

a The total of forty-one vessels that fished in the WCPFC Convention Area in 2021 includes one handline vessel.
b The total of thirty-seven vessels that fished in the WCPFC Convention Area in 2023 includes one 'line – unknown' vessel.

2.5 Species of special interest

Australia implements a mandatory reporting scheme for fisheries interactions with protected species, which includes species of special interest. Interactions with these species are recorded by fishers in their logbooks and are reported to AFMA. These interactions are then forwarded to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water on a quarterly basis. A summary of these interactions, from logbooks, is presented in Table 6. Life status of the animal involved in the interaction is also recorded.

In 2025, interactions were recorded with 17 green turtles (16 alive and 1 dead), 2 hawksbill turtles (all alive), 23 leatherback turtles (22 alive and 1 dead), 7 loggerhead turtles (6 alive and 1 dead), 2 Olive Ridley turtles (all alive), and 16 unidentified turtles (14 alive and 2 dead).

In 2025, interactions were recorded with 7 unspecified shearwaters (all dead), 2 unspecified petrels and shearwaters (all dead), 4 black browed albatrosses (all dead), 66 unspecified albatrosses (27 alive and 36 dead), and 2 unspecified birds (all dead).

Interactions were also recorded in 2025 with 3 short-finned pilot whale (all alive), 2 unspecified toothed whales (both alive), 1 common dolphin (alive), 1 unspecified dolphin (alive), 18 Australian fur seal (all alive) and 24 unspecified seals (all alive).

From July of 2015, the logbooks of the Australian longline fleet were subject to potential verification through electronic monitoring. This has resulted in an increase in the reporting level of interactions with species of special interest since 2016 (Table 6).

Observed captures are reported in Table 7. In 2025, there were 1 observed capture of leatherback turtle (alive), 1 capture of a sea turtle (alive), 8 captures of unspecified albatrosses (2 alive and 6 dead), 2 captures of australian fur seal (both alive), 4 captures of unspecified eared seals (all alive), 1 capture of unspecified dolphin (alive) and 1 capture of unspecified whale (alive).

2.5.1 Sea turtles

The ETBF requires the use of large circle hooks in Australia's shallow-set pelagic longline fisheries targeting swordfish, consistent with CMM2018-03. Mitigation requirements in the ETBF for sea turtles are reported in Appendix B.

2.5.2 Seabirds and marine mammals

Australia has extensive mitigation requirements for seabirds in the ETBF (Appendix B). More specific seabird interaction information is presented in Table 8 and Table 9. Table 10 provides the proportion of mitigation measures used.

Table 6 Interactions with species of special interest recorded in logbooks for the Australian longline fleet in the WCPFC Convention Area, 2021 to 2025. Interactions not identifid to species level are noted as unspecified (unspec).

Group	Common name	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Seabirds	Black-browed albatross	0	0	4	0	4
	Shy albatross	0	1	0	0	0
	Sooty albatross	0	0	0	0	0
	Wandering albatross	0	1	0	0	0
	Albatrosses (unspec)	20	33	20	62	66
	Cape Petrel	0	0	0	0	0
	Sooty shearwater	0	0	0	0	0
	Short-tailed shearwater	1	2	5	1	0
	Flesh-footed shearwater	16	10	0	1	0
	Shearwaters (unspec)	5	24	16	19	7
	Petrel and shearwaters (unspec)	0	4	1	11	2
	Terns	0	0	0	0	0
	Australian gannet	0	0	0	0	0
	Birds (unspec)	16	0	4	6	2
	Subtotal	**58**	**75**	**50**	**100**	**81**
Turtles	Green turtle	16	32	15	16	17
	Hawksbill turtle	2	0	0	1	2
	Leatherback turtle	22	25	35	14	23
	Loggerhead turtle	12	15	6	13	7
	Flatback turtle	1	0	0	0	0
	Pacific (Olive) Ridley turtle	5	6	2	7	2
	Turtles (unspec)	33	25	14	25	16
	Subtotal	**91**	**103**	**72**	**76**	**67**
Mammals	Melon-headed whale	0	0	0	0	0
	Toothed whales	0	5	2	2	2
	Short-finned pilot whale	4	2	1	2	3
	Long-finned pilot whale	2	1	6	3	0
	False killer whale	0	1	0	0	0
	Humpback whale	0	0	1	0	0
	Whales (unspec)	0	0	2	0	2
	Common dolphin	0	2	6	0	1
	Bottlenose dolphin	1	0	2	0	0
	Dolphin (unspec)	1	5	0	2	1

Australian fur seal	0	2	1	3	18
New Zealand fur seal	0	0	0	0	0
Seals (unspec)	11	13	5	1	24
Subtotal	**19**	**32**	**27**	**13**	**50**
Unknown or other	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
TOTAL	**168**	**207**	**149**	**189**	**198**

Table 7 Observed captures of species of special interest for the Australian longline fleet in the WCPFC Convention Area, 2021 to 2025. Interactions not identified to species level are noted as unspecified (unspec).

Group	Common name	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Seabirds	Black-browed albatross	0	0	0	0	0
	Shy albatross	0	0	0	0	0
	Wandering albatross	0	0	0	0	0
	Albatrosses (other)	8	1	3	4	8
	Cape petrel	0	0	0	0	0
	Gannets and boobies	0	0	1	0	0
	Great crested tern	0	0	0	0	0
	Flesh-footed shearwater	0	0	0	0	0
	Wilson's storm petrel	0	0	0	0	0
	Petrels Prions and Shearwaters	1	1	1	2	0
	Shearwaters	4	7	1	5	0
	Birds (unspec)	1	1	4	4	0
	Subtotal	**14**	**10**	**10**	**15**	**8**
Turtles	Green turtle	0	0	0	0	0
	Hawksbill turtle	0	0	0	0	0
	Leatherback turtle	6	3	4	0	1
	Loggerhead turtle	0	0	0	0	0
	Pacific (Olive) Ridley	0	0	0	0	0
	Turtles (unspec)	11	13	4	4	1
	Subtotal	**17**	**16**	**8**	**4**	**2**
Mammals	Dolphin (unspec)	0	0	0	0	1
	Long-finned pilot whale	0	0	0	0	0
	Short-finned pilot whale	0	0	0	0	0
	Whales (unspec)	0	2	2	0	1
	Eared seals	1	1	0	0	4
	Australian fur seal	0	0	0	0	2
	Subtotal	**1**	**3**	**2**	**0**	**8**
	TOTAL	**32**	**29**	**20**	**19**	**18**

Note: In 2025, E-monitoring data for 2024 were >90% complete. Updated (100% complete) data for 2024 are provided this report.

CMM 2011-03 regarding the intentional setting of purse-seine gear on cetaceans entered into force on 1 January 2013. Such setting practices are prohibited in Australian purse-seine fisheries since the introduction of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act*. There were no reported interactions with cetaceans in purse-seine fisheries in 2025. There was no relevant purse-seine effort in the WCPFC area in 2025.

Table 8 Effort and observed seabird captures by fishing year for the ETBF a) south of 30°S, b) for 25°S – 30°S and c) for 23°N – 25°S. For each year, the tables provide the number of longline vessels, total number of hooks (000's), number of observed hooks (000's), observer coverage (percentage of hooks observed), number of observed captures and the capture rate (captures per thousand hooks).

a) South of 30°S

Year	Fishing effort (000's hooks)				Observed seabird captures	
	Number of vessels	Number of hooks	Observed hooks	% hooks observed	Capture number	Capture rate
2021	33	2,104	190	9.0	11	0.058
2022	31	2,267	217	9.6	3	0.014
2023	28	2,357	220	9.3	7	0.032
2024	30	2,834	278	9.8	7	0.025
2025	34	3,614	324	8.9	8	0.025

Note: E-monitoring data for 2024 were >90% complete in the 2025 report. Updated (100% complete) data for 2024 are included in this report.

b) 25°S – 30°S

Year	Fishing effort (000's hooks)				Observed seabird captures	
	Number of vessels	Number of hooks	Observed hooks	% hooks observed	Capture number	Capture rate
2021	22	2,658	265	9.9	1	0.004
2022	22	2,594	242	9.3	6	0.025
2023	21	3,407	341	10.0	2	0.006
2024	22	3,623	340	9.4	8	0.024
2025	19	3,259	256	7.8	0	0.000

Note: E-monitoring data for 2024 were >90% complete in 2025. Updated (100% complete) data for 2024 are included in this report.

c) 23°N – 25°S

Year	Fishing effort (000's hooks)				Observed seabird captures	
	Number of vessels	Number of hooks	Observed hooks	% hooks observed	Capture number	Capture rate
2021	17	3,030	288	9.5	2	0.007
2022	20	2,060	210	10.2	1	0.005
2023	17	1,573	142	9.1	1	0.007
2024	20	1,548	149	9.6	0	0.000
2025	20	1,355	102	7.5	0	0.000

Note: No seabird captures have been observed north of 23°N between 2021-2025 as there was no effort. E-monitoring data for 2024 were >90% complete in the 2025 report. Updated (100% complete) data for 2024 are included in this report.

Table 9 Number of observed seabird captures in the ETBF, 2025, by species and area

Species	South of 30°S	25°S–30°S	23°N–25°S	North of 23°N	Total Captures
Birds	0	0	0	0	0
Albatrosses	8	0	0	0	8
Gannets and boobies	0	0	0	0	0
Petrels and Shearwaters	0	0	0	0	0
Shearwaters	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**8**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**8**

Table 10 Proportion of mitigation types used by the fleet 2021 to 2025

Combination of mitigation measures	Proportion of observed effort using mitigation measures				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
TL + WB	0.87	0.86	0.88	0.90	0.85
TL + WB + NS	0.13	0.14	0.12	0.10	0.15
Total	**1.00**	**1.00**	**1.00**	**1.00**	**1.00**

TL Tori line. **NS** Night setting. **WB** Weighted branch lines.

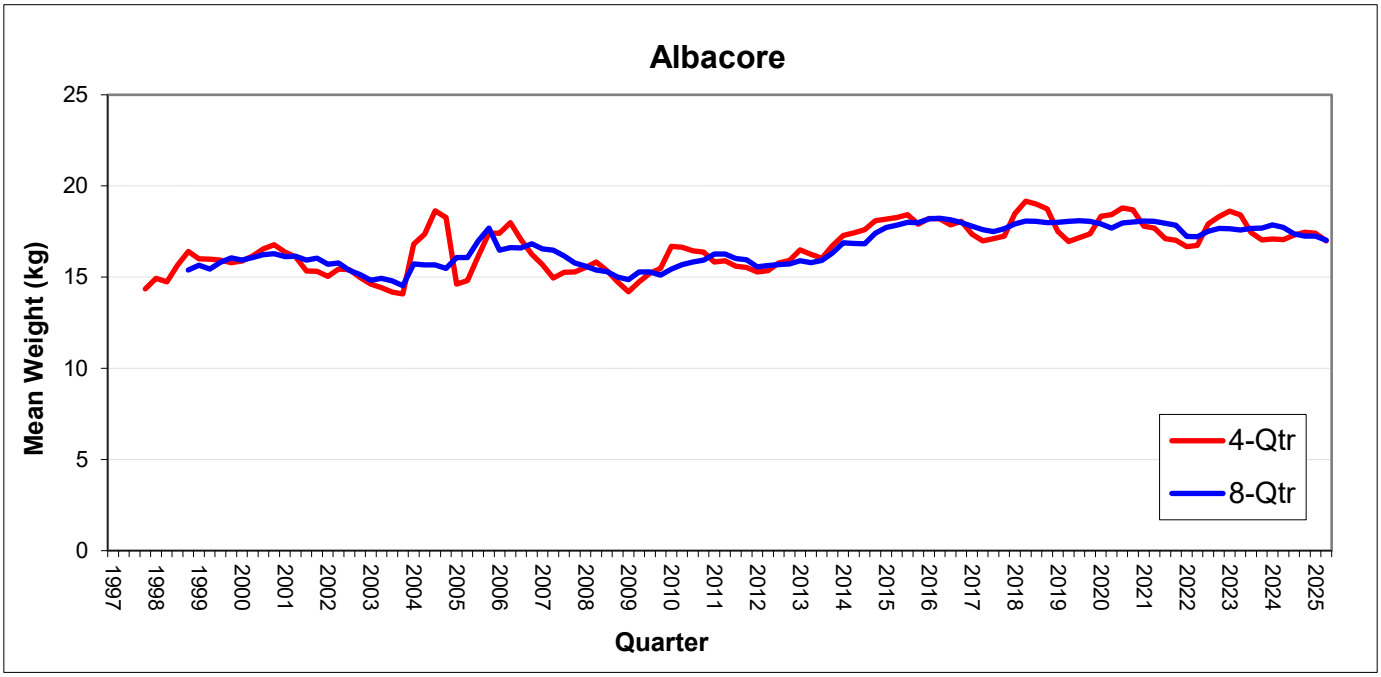
Note: Proportions were derived from the AFMA observer database and, from July 2015 onwards, from electronic monitoring data. E-monitoring data for 2024 were >90% complete in the 2025 report. Updated (100% complete) data for 2024 are included in this report.

2.6 Trends in size composition of retained catch

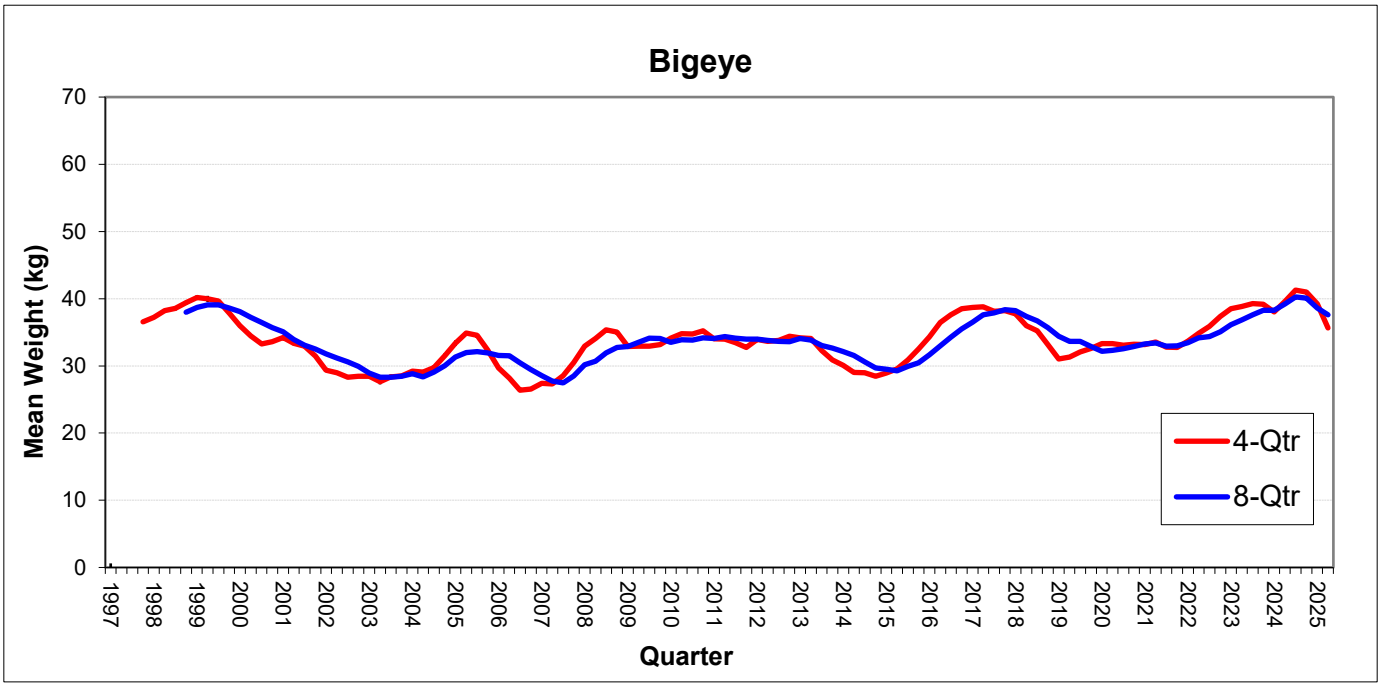
The size composition (based on processed weights) of albacore, bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna and striped marlin is shown in Figure 5. Albacore has maintained a high 8-quarter running mean weight of around 17 to 18 kg since 2016 (Figure 5a). The 8-quarter running mean of bigeye tuna declined to around 32 kg in 2020 but increased again to around 38 kg by the end of 2025 (Figure 5b). Yellowfin tuna maintained a high 8-quarter running mean weight of 39 to 40 kg between 2016 to 2018, but has since decreased to around 33 kg in 2025 (Figure 5c). The 8-quarter running mean weight of striped marlin was around 63 kg from 2018 to 2020 before decreasing to about 58 kg in 2025 (Figure 5d). Swordfish showed an increasing trend in its 8-quarter running mean between 2015 to 2018 before declining to around 40 kg in 2024 and 2025 (Figure 5e). Data for Pacific bluefin tuna were not available.

Figure 5 (a–e) Time series of 4-quarter and 8-quarter running means from 1997 to 2025, by quarter, of processed fish weight (in kg) of a) albacore, b) bigeye tuna, c) yellowfin tuna, d) striped marlin and e) swordfish sampled across the entire ETBF based on the data collected from the port sampling program

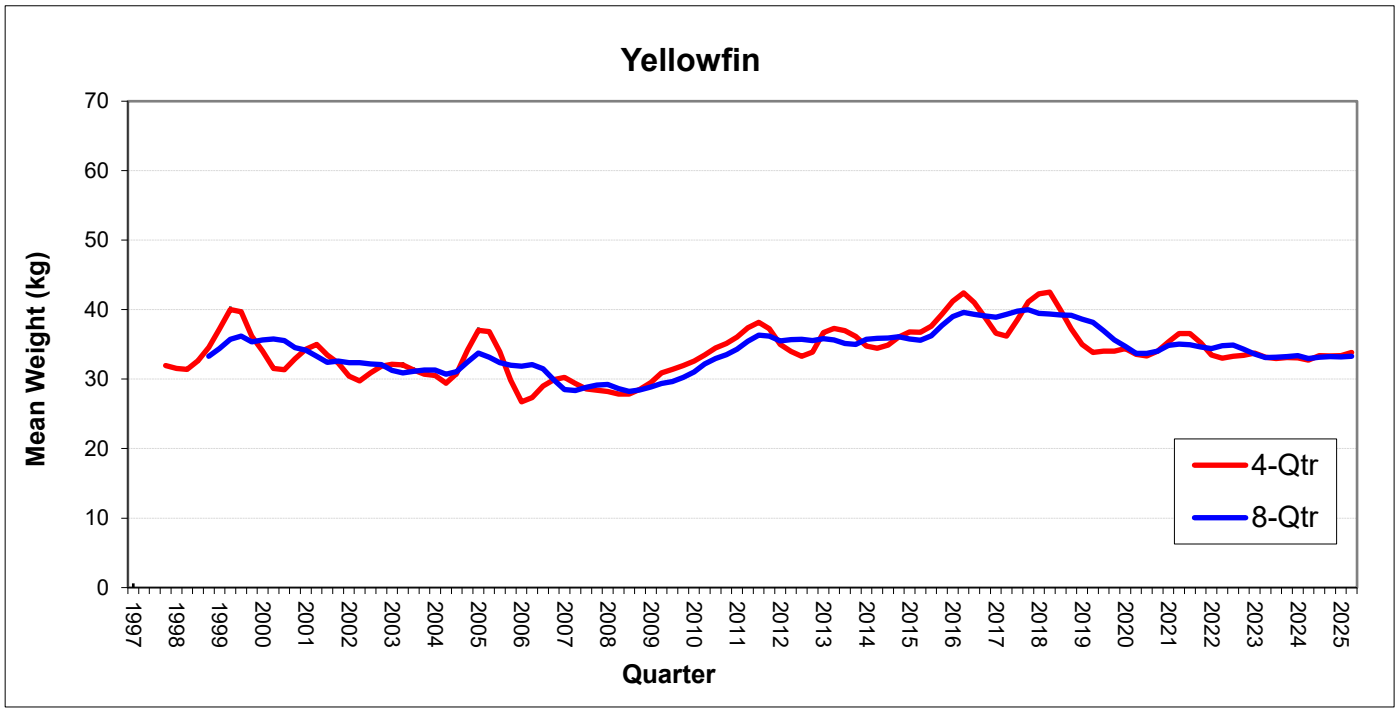
a)



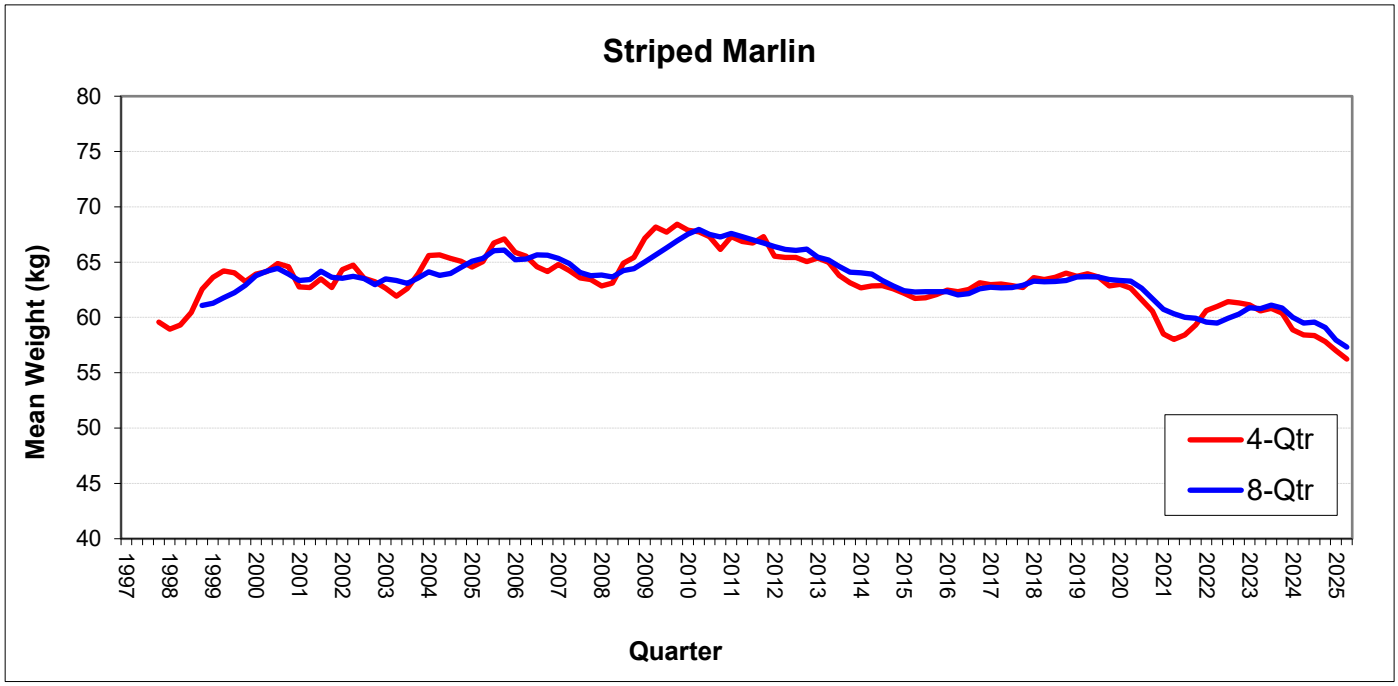
b)



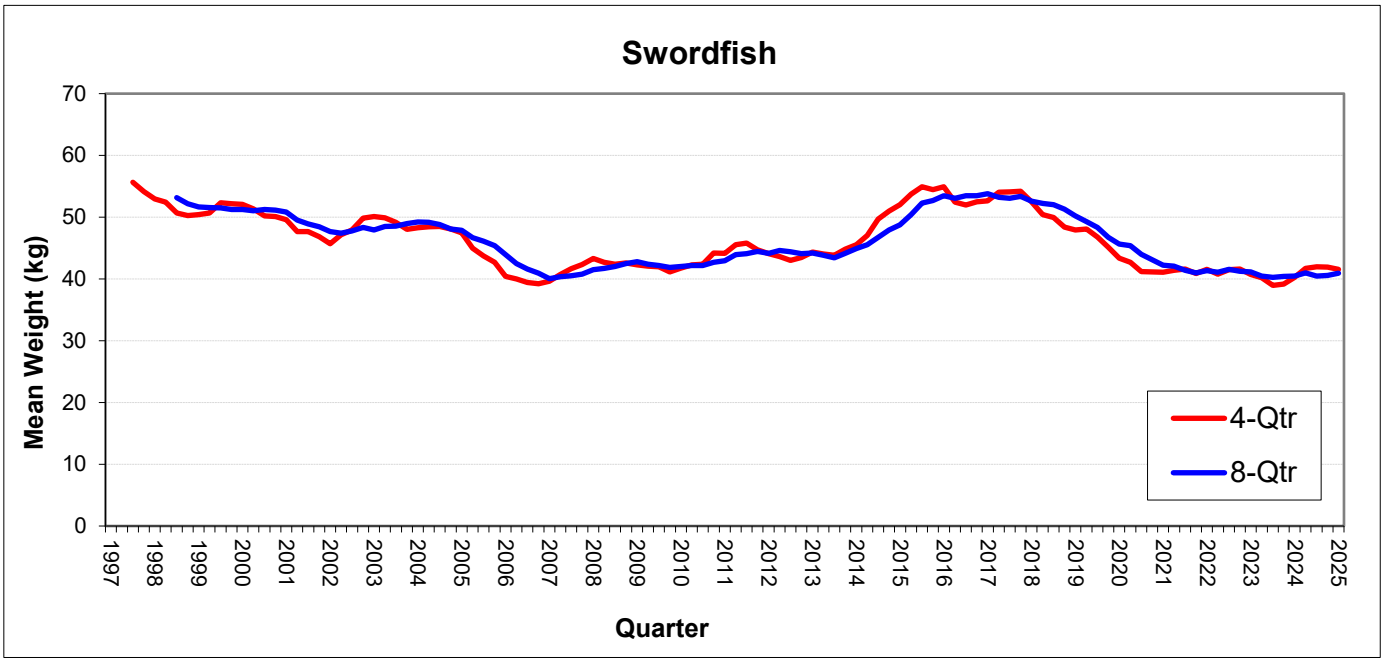
c)


Yellowfin
Mean Weight (kg)
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
1997
1998
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
Quarter
4-Qtr
8-Qtr

d)


Striped Marlin
Mean Weight (kg)
80
75
70
65
60
55
50
45
40
1997
1998
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
Quarter
4-Qtr
8-Qtr

e)


Swordfish
Mean Weight (kg)
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
1997
1998
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
2019
2020
2021
2022
2023
2024
2025
Quarter
4-Qtr
8-Qtr

3 Coastal state reporting

There are currently no foreign fishing vessels licensed to operate in the AFZ.

4 Socio-economic factors

The gross value of production (GVP) of the ETBF most recently peaked in 2015–16, reaching $63.1 million in real terms (2024–25 dollars). Between 2016–17 and 2024–25 real GVP remained below the 2015–16 value and averaged $43.1 million because of lower catch volumes and despite generally improved prices for key species during that period. In 2024–25 GVP decreased by 4% from the previous financial year to $43.1 million driven by higher yellowfin catch volume.

5 Disposal of catch

Catch from the ETBF is highly export oriented—particularly for premium tuna species—with total exports of bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna and swordfish representing 52%, 31% and 30% respectively of catch on a 5-year average basis. These three species are exported (mostly fresh or chilled) mainly to Japan and the United States. On average, 65% of albacore catch is exported (predominantly frozen) mostly to Thailand (mainly for canning) and Spain. Catch not exported is directed towards domestic consumption.

In 2024–25 the combined value of exports from the east-coast Australia of albacore, bigeye tuna and yellowfin tuna (the three key species of tuna caught in the WCPFC) increased by 72% to $24.8 million from the prior financial year. The overall increase in export value was driven by 96% higher export value of yellowfin tuna to $20.6 million (reflecting 105% export volume than the prior year). Bigeye tuna export value increased by 26% to $2.6 million and albacore export value decreased by 13% to $1.6 million.

The average export unit price of swordfish is typically below yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna, the other key species landed in the ETBF. In 2024–25 the value of swordfish exports from the east coast of Australia increased by 44% to $3.5 million, driven by 11% higher export volumes and reinforced by higher average export unit prices.

6 Onshore developments

Nil

7 Future prospects for the fishery

Commercial operators view the Australian skipjack fisheries as an important development opportunity because significant catching capacity exists in Port Lincoln, South Australia. Currently, catches are low as a result of variability in the availability of skipjack tuna in the AFZ, variable participation levels, low profit margins and the closure of the Port Lincoln cannery; however, there is room for development in this fishery.

The AFMA Commission agreed on the total allowable commercial catches (TACCs) for the ETBF. These apply to the 2025 season which commenced on 1 January 2025. The TACCs for the five main target species are: albacore (2,500 t); bigeye tuna (1,056 t); swordfish (1,047 t); striped marlin (351 t); and yellowfin tuna (2,400 t).

8 Status of data collection systems

8.1 Logbook data collection and verification

AFMA introduced a logbook for domestic longliners in 1986. The logbook has been revised on several occasions. The latest (AL06—Australian Pelagic Longline Daily Fishing Log) was introduced in 2007; vessels began submitting AL06 logbooks in November 2007. Return of logbooks by Australian longliners improved when, in 1995, it became a condition of fishing permits and has been close to 100% in recent years. Logbooks have also been introduced for the skipjack tuna purse-seine fisheries; PS01—Australian Purse Seine Daily Fishing Log was distributed in July 2002 with the first skipjack tuna catch recorded in this logbook in December 2003. Weights from catch disposal records are verified; weights recorded on logbooks are an estimate only. From 1 July 2015 logbooks have been verified through e-monitoring. As of 2021, all reporting in the ETBF is done via electronic logbooks.

8.2 Observer program

AFMA observers were deployed on domestic longliners from 2001 to 2015. From July 2003 to 2015, observers were deployed more broadly across the fishery with more general duties, such as the collection of data on fishing gear and the size and species composition of catches.

AFMA implemented a trial of e-monitoring to evaluate the effectiveness of this technology for a range of fishery monitoring purposes and to conduct a cost–benefit analysis in 2009–10 (Piasente et al. 2012). E-monitoring became compulsory for all ETBF longline vessels from 1 July 2015. E-monitoring replaced human observers in the ETBF for all in-zone observer requirements, although the government maintains the right to place human observers on board vessels if there is a need to do so. At least 10% of the video footage from all hauls is reviewed to verify the accuracy of logbooks which are required to be completed for 100% of shots. This review rate may be increased in some cases.

In 2025, the coverage rate was 8.2% (Table 11). During the reporting period, Australian vessels operated principally in Australian waters with occasional forays onto the high seas. Australia's national observer program is accredited under the WCPFC ROP.

E-monitoring (observed) data for 2024 were estimated to be >90% complete in 2025. Updated (100% complete) data for 2024 are provided below.

Table 11 Summary of longline observer coverage (by hooks) for 2024 and 2025

CCM Fleet	Fishery	No. of Hooks			Days fished			Days at sea			No. of trips			See notes
		Total est.	Obs.	Obs %	Total est.	Obs.	Obs %	Total est.	Obs.	Obs %	Total est.	Obs.	Obs %	
Australia (2024)	Domestic	8.0 million	766,547	9.6										Nil
Australia (2025)	Domestic	8.4 million	692,507	8.2										Nil

Note: Blacked-out cells are not applicable. In 2025**,** E-monitoring data for 2024 were >90% complete. Updated (100% complete) data for 2024 are provided in this report.

8.3 Port sampling program

The collection of individual processed fish weights from processors receiving longline caught fish from the ETBF commenced in mid-1997. The program mainly focuses on the five principal target species in the fishery (yellowfin tuna, bigeye tuna, albacore, swordfish and striped marlin), though data on a range of other species have also been collected. During the period from July 1997 to December 2025 over 2.45 million individual fish weights pertaining to the five main target species have been collected. Coverage rates (% of landed fish sampled) for the target species are generally high, and for the 5-year period between 2021 and 2025 have averaged around 89% for yellowfin tuna, 89% for bigeye tuna, 86% for swordfish and 90% for striped marlin, while for albacore 5% of landed fish have been individually sampled (Table 12). Individual fish weights for another 415,017 fish from 57 non-target species have also been collected across all years. Bulk weights for albacore sampled in batches (covering on average 95% of the catch between 2021 and 2025) and other species are also collected. Where both the total batched weight and the number of fish have been recorded, these bulk weights cover 1,659,328 fish for 40 species (including 1,161,703 albacore).

Table 12 Estimated annual coverage of operational catch and effort (logbooks), observer data (% hooks) and port sampling (% coverage rate for the 5 main target species of individual fish weights collected from processors receiving longline-caught fish in the ETBF) for the Australian fleet active in the WCPFC Convention Area, 2020 to 2025

Gear	Year	Operational catch & effort coverage (%)	Observer coverage (%)	Port sampling coverage (%)					
				YFT	BET	ALB	SWO	STM	SKJ
Longline[a]	2021	100	9.9	91	91	3	92	94	0
	2022	100	9.4	90	91	3	90	90	0
	2023	100	9.3	90	82	7	82	88	0
	2024	100	9.9	90	86	7	83	92	0
	2025	100	8.2	86	91	7	84	88	0
Purse seine	2021	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2022	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2023	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2024	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2025	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

ALB Albacore. BET Bigeye tuna. NA Not applicable. SKJ Skipjack tuna. STM Striped marlin. SWO Swordfish. YFT Yellowfin tuna.

a Includes fish taken by minor line.

Note: E-monitoring data for 2024 were >90% complete in the 2025 report. Updated (100% complete) data for 2024 are included in this report. Data for Pacific bluefin tuna were not available.

Source: Scott Cooper (CSIRO) and AFMA observer database

8.4 Unloading/transhipment

Catch disposal records are the formal method for monitoring unloads and were implemented in the ETBF in January 2006 (Table 13). Catch disposal records are completed by both the fisher and licensed fish receiver at the point of unload to obtain accurate data on fish numbers and verified weight by species. Skippers tend to under-estimate the weights reported in logbooks for most species, so the catch disposal record data have been reported in domestic official statistics since

2007 and are the authoritative figures for retained catch in the fishery. Compliance checks are conducted on unloads as part of a risk-based compliance programme. Weight estimates are also derived from the size-monitoring program and are likely to be more accurate than logbook data for that part of the time series.

Table 13 Annual catch estimates (converted whole weights) for the ETBF, 2021 to 2025, derived from catch disposal records

Year	Albacore	Yellowfin	Bigeye	Striped marlin	Swordfish	Pacific bluefin tuna	Other	Total
2021	1094.8	1593.3	391.0	207.1	619.8	5.0	174.5	4085.5
2022	1134.3	1367.6	347.8	284.0	727.6	8.6	163.6	4033.4
2023	835.5	1713.0	235.1	265.7	794.3	27.2	166.4	4037.2
2024	672.9	2563.5	300.3	365.2	697.0	27.5	23.52	4861.7
2025	856.2	2024.4	306.0	277.5	692.1	44.3	155.1	4355.6

Note: Estimates are in tonnes. As of 2020, catch of southern bluefin tuna is no longer included in 'Other'. As of 2026, catches of Pacifc bluefin tuna are provided separately and not included in 'Other'

No transhipment activities were undertaken in 2025. No Australian vessels were authorised to tranship on the high seas.

8.5 Other

AFMA introduced the compulsory requirement for all Commonwealth endorsed fishing vessels to be fitted with Integrated Computer Vessel Monitoring Systems (ICVMS) 2007. For 2025, no ETBF vessel received formal warnings for non-operational ICVMS. There was 1 VMS infringement. An investigation was conducted and no further action was taken. There were no other ICVMS infringements. Compliance with ICVMS requirements has increased markedly since mid-2008. AFMA uses the ICVMS to assist in planning inspections and operations, to assist the observer program in deploying scientific observers and to actively monitor compliance with closed areas.

A range of data is also collected via individual research projects (see the Research Activities section for more information).

9 Research activities

The Australian Government and the fishing industry allocate considerable funds to fishery research and monitoring each year. In addition to the logbook and observer programs, key areas of research in past years and ongoing research include:

9.1 Biological research projects

- Reproductive dynamics of swordfish in the domestic longline fishery off eastern Australia (Young & Drake 2002)
- Age and growth of bigeye tuna from the eastern and western AFZ (Farley et al. 2003)
- Age and growth of swordfish from Australian waters (Young & Drake 2004)
- Population biology and habitat preferences of striped marlin in eastern Australia (Keller & Davie 2009)
- Population biology of albacore tuna in the Australian region (Farley et al. 2012)
- Spatial dynamics of swordfish in the south Pacific Ocean (Evans et al. 2012)
- Defining regional connections in southwest Pacific swordfish (Wilcox 2012)
- Determination of swordfish growth and maturity relevant to the southwest Pacific stock (Farley et al. 2016)
- Age, growth and maturity of bigeye tuna in the western and central Pacific Ocean (Farley et al. 2017)
- Yellowfin tuna age and growth in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (Farley et al. 2020)
- Feasibility of close-kin mark-recapture assessment for South Pacific albacore in the WCPO (Bravington et al. 2021)
- Bomb radiocarbon age validation for bigeye and yellowfin tunas in the WCP (Andrews et al. 2022)

9.2 Assessment-related research projects

- Dynamics of the interactions of the fishery and swordfish on seamounts off eastern Australia (Campbell & Hobday 2003)
- Migration and habitat preferences of bigeye tuna on the east coast of Australia (Gunn et al. 2005)
- Stock assessment of striped marlin in the south-western Pacific Ocean (Langley et al. 2006)
- Developing harvest strategies for the ETBF (AFMA 2007)
- Developing robust stock-status indicators (Basson & Dowling 2008)

- Updating the stock assessment of swordfish in the south Pacific Ocean (Kolody, Campbell & Davies 2008)
- Determining the depths fished and the effective longline effort targeted at various species in the ETBF (Campbell & Young 2010)
- Integrated evaluation of management strategies for tropical multi-species long-line fisheries (Kolody et al. 2010)
- Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery size monitoring program (Williams et al. ongoing)
- Integrated analysis and assessment supporting implementation of the management and harvest strategy framework within the ETBF (Campbell 2011)
- Predicting the impact of hook decrementation on the distribution of fishing effort in the ETBF (Wilcox et al. 2011)
- Analysis of recreational fishing catch and effort data to support the striped marlin stock assessment (Ghosn et al. 2012)
- Standardisation of commercial catch and effort data to support the stock assessment of striped marlin (Campbell 2012)
- Changes in fishing strategies in the ETBF in response to the introduction of quota management (Preece, Cambell & Hillary 2012)
- Development of an approach to harvest strategy management of internationally managed multi-species fisheries (Hillary et al. 2016)
- Developing innovative approaches to improve CPUE standardisation for Australia's multi-species longline fisheries (Campbell et al. 2017)
- Data management, assessment and implementation of harvest strategies for Australia's tropical tuna fisheries (Campbell 2017)
- Determination of the spatial dynamics and movement rates of the principal target species within the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery and connectivity with the broader western and central Pacific Ocean - beyond tagging (Evans et al. 2021)
- Data management, assessment and implementation of harvest strategies for Australia's tropical tuna fisheries (Campbell 2020)
- ETBF striped marlin harvest strategy revision and evaluation (Preece 2021)
- Management strategy evaluation of the broadbill swordfish ETBF harvest strategies (Hillary 2020)
- Data management, assessment and implementation of harvest strategies for Australia's tropical tuna fisheries (Campbell et al. 2020; Williams et al. 2023)
- Scientific advice for management of Tropical Tuna and Billfish Fisheries (CSIRO, July 2023-May 2026)

9.3 Ecological research projects

- Ecological risk assessment for the effects of fishing (Webb et al. 2007)
- Rapid quantitative assessment (Zhou, Smith & Fuller 2007)
- Determining the ecological impacts of longline fishing in the ETBF (Young et al. 2009)
- Ecological risk assessment for the effects of fishing report for the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery: Longline sub-fishery (Sporcic et al. 2019, 2025)
- Investigation of oceanographic and environmental factors impacting on the ETBF (Hartog et al. 2023; Scales et al. 2023)

9.4 Bycatch research projects

- A review of byproduct interactions and economics in Australia's tuna and billfish fisheries (Bromhead et al. 2005)
- Marine turtle mitigation in Australia's pelagic longline fishery (Robins, Bradshw & Kreutz 2007)
- The effects of bycatch mitigation measures, such as circle hooks and wire leaders, on target and non-target catches (Ward et al. 2008)
- Effect of line shooters on the sink rates of pelagic longlines and the effect on seabird interactions (Robertson, Candy & Wienecke 2010a)
- Factors affecting the sink rates of baited hooks and the impact on seabird interactions in pelagic longline fisheries (Robertson & van den Hoff 2010; Robertson et al. 2010b; Robertson & Candy 2014)
- Branch line weighting regimes to reduce the incidental catch of seabirds in pelagic longline fisheries (Robertson et al. 2013)
- The effects of propeller turbulence on sink rates of baited hooks (Robertson & Candy 2014)
- Development of an underwater bait setting system (Robertson et al. 2015)
- Improving the effectiveness, efficiency and safety of mitigation tools for protected species interactions in the Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (FRDC 2020-041, 2020, ongoing).
- Improving the management of wildlife interactions in pelagic longline fisheries (FRDC 2021-078, 2021, ongoing).

Appendix A: Common and Scientific Names

Common names	Scientific names
Albacore	*Thunnus alalunga*
Albatrosses (other)	*Diomedeidae* spp.
Australian fur seal	*Arctocephalus pusillus doriferus*
Australian gannet	*Morus serrator*
Australian sea lion	*Neophoca cinerea*
Baleen whale	Mysticeti
Bigeye tuna	*Thunnus obesus*
Birds	Aves
Black marlin	*Makaira indica*
Black-browed albatross	*Thalassarche melanophrys*
Blacktip sharks	*Carcharhinus* spp.
Blue marlin	*Makaira mazara*
Blue shark	*Prionace glauca*
Bottlenose dolphin	*Tursiops truncatus*
Bronze whaler shark	*Carcharhinus brachyurus*
Buller's albatross	*Thalassarche bulleri*
Cape petrel	*Daption capense*
Common dolphin	*Delphinus delphis*
Cormorants	*Phalacrocoracidae*
Cuvier's beaked whale	*Ziphius cavirostris*
Dolphin	Delphinidae
Dugong	*Dugong dugon*
Dusky shark	*Carcharhinus obscurus*
Escolar	*Lepidocybium flavobrunneum*
False killer whale	*Pseudorca crassidens*
Flatback turtle	*Natator depressa*
Flesh-footed shearwater	*Puffinus carneipes*
Great crested tern	*Sterna bergii*
Great skua	*Catharacta skua*
Great-winged petrel	*Pterodroma macroptera*
Green turtle	*Chelonia mydas*
Grey-headed albatross	*Thalassarche chrysostoma*
Hammerhead shark	*Sphyrna* spp.
Hawksbill turtle	*Eretmochelys imbricata*
Humpback whale	*Megaptera novaeangliae*
Lancetfish	*Alepisaurus sp.*
Leatherback turtle	*Dermochelys coriacea*
Loggerhead turtle	*Carretta carretta*
Long-finned pilot whale	*Globicephala melas*
Longfin mako	*Isurus paucus*
Mahi mahi	*Coryphaena hippurus*
Melon-headed whale	*Peponcephala electra*
Moonfish (opah)	*Lampris guttatus*
New Zealand fur seal	*Arctocephalus fosteri*
Northern bluefin tuna	*Thunnus orientalis*
Ocean sunfish	*Mola mola*
Oceanic whitetip shark	*Carcharhinus longimanus*
Oilfish	*Ruvettus pretiosus*
Pacific bluefin tuna	*Thunnus orientalis*

Pacific (olive) ridley turtle	*Lepidochelys olivacea*
Petrels, prions and shearwaters	*Procellariidae* spp.
Porbeagle	*Lamna nasus*
Ray's bream	*Brama brama*
Rudderfish	*Centrolophus niger*
Sailfish	*Istiophorus platypterus*
Scalloped hammerhead	*Sphyrna lewini*
Seals	Phocidae
Shearwaters	*Puffinus* spp.
Shortbill spearfish	*Tetrapturus angustirostris*
Shortfin mako	*Isurus oxyrinchus*
Short-finned pilot whale	*Globicephala macrorhynchus*
Short-tailed shearwater	*Puffinus tenuirostris*
Shy albatross	*Thalassarche cauta*
Silky shark	*Carcharhinus falciformis*
Skipjack tuna	*Katsuwonus pelamis*
Smooth hammerhead	*Sphyrna zygaena*
Sooty shearwater	*Puffinus griseus*
Southern bluefin tuna	*Thunnus maccoyii*
Southern royal albatross	*Diomedea epomophora*
Striped marlin	*Kajikia audax*
Swordfish	*Xiphias gladius*
Thresher shark	*Alopias vulpinus*
Tiger shark	*Galeocerdo cuvier*
Toothed whale	Odontoceti
Turtles	Testudinata
Wahoo	*Acanthocybium solandri*
Wandering albatross	*Diomedea exulans*
Wedge-tailed shearwater	*Puffinus pacificus*
Westland petrel	*Procellaria westlandica*
Whale shark	*Rhincodon typus*
Wilson's storm petrel	*Oceanites oceanicus*
Yellowfin tuna	*Thunnus albacares*
Yellow-nosed albatross	*Thalassarche chlororhynchos*

Appendix B: Mandatory mitigation measures in the ETBF 2025

Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery Management Arrangements Booklet 2025

Seabirds

At all times you must:

- Carry more than one assembled tori lines onboard.
- Not discharge offal while setting.
- Comply with seabird interaction obligations relating to the Threat Abatement Plan (TAP).

When you are fishing south of 25°S you must:

- Deploy a tori line before commencing a shot when fishing between the hours of nautical dawn and nautical dusk.
- A tori line is not required to be deployed when performing fishing operations between the hours of nautical dusk and nautical dawn.
- Use only non-frozen bait.
- Weight longlines with either a minimum of:
  - 60 g weights at a distance of no more than 3.5 m from each hook, or
  - 98 g weights at a distance of no more than 4 m from each hook, or
  - 40 g weights immediately adjacent to the hook, or at no more than 0.5 m from the hook, with dead, non-frozen baits attached to the hooks, or
  - A hook-shielding device attached and deployed directly to each hook according to minimum branch line specifications.

Note: If you are fishing south of 40°S during the summer TAP season (1 September to 30 April), you must ensure all longline hooks are deployed only during the hours between nautical dusk and nautical dawn.

Your tori line must be:

- At least 100 m long.
- Must be deployed from a position on board the boat and utilise an additional towed line, material or object to create drag and ensure that it remains above the water surface for a minimum of 75 m from the stern of the boat.
- Must have streamers attached to it with a maximum interval between the streamers of 3.5 m.
- All streamers must be maintained to ensure that their lengths are as close to the water surface as possible.

Individual vessels that fail to consistently avoid or minimise interaction rates with seabirds are subject to additional monitoring and mitigation requirements. Specifically, vessels that exceed a rate of 0.05 birds/1,000 hooks - in two of the last three consecutive Summer (or Winter) TAP seasons, or in consecutive Summer and Winter seasons, or take more than ten birds in a season - will be notified and placed on a watchlist. If that vessel then breaches the trigger again in-season, it will be required to implement additional mitigation. That will comprise either stronger line weighting, night setting, hook shields, or moving the area of operation at least five degrees north (to a lower seabird abundance area). Additional mitigation will be required on top of this if the vessel continues to have seabird interactions. The additional mitigations measures remain in place until AFMA notifies the SFR holder in writing that the vessel has achieved a seabird by-catch rate less than 0.05 birds per 1,000 hooks.

Sea turtles

Circle hooks

Large circle hooks must be used for shallow sets with less than 8 hooks per basket.

De-hooking device

At all times you must carry on board a minimum of one de-hooking device, with the following specifications:

- The device must enable the hook to be secured and the barb shielded so that the barb does not re-engage with the fish while the hook is being removed
- The device must be blunt with all edges rounded
- Where more than one size of hook is to be carried, a de-hooking device (or devices) must be carried that can be used with all hooks on the boat; and
- The shaft of the device must be a minimum of 1.5 metres in length.

Line cutting device

At all times you must carry on board a minimum of one line cutting device. The line cutting device must be constructed and used in accordance with the following specifications:

- The device must be constructed to allow the line to be cut as close to the hook as possible
- The blade of the device must be enclosed in a blunt rounded (arc-shaped) cover with the hook exposed on the inside of the arc; and
- The shaft of the device must be a minimum of 1.5 metres in length.

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