



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
TWENTY-SECOND REGULAR SESSION
11-19 August 2026
Apia, Samoa (Hybrid)**

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

WCPFC-SC22-2026-AR-CCM11_Rev01

7 July 2026

Submitted by Kiribati

**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
TWENTY-SECOND REGULAR SESSION**

July 2026

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



**Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources
KIRIBATI**

Scientific data was provided to the Commission in accordance with the decision relating to the provision of scientific data to the Commission by 30th April 2026	[YES]
If no, please indicate the reason(s) and intended actions.	

Table of Contents

1. Abstract	4
2. Tabular Annual Fisheries Information	4
3. Background	4
3.1 Pole and Line	4
3.2 Longline	5
3.3 Purse seine	5
3.4 Troll and Vertical Hand Line	5
4 Flag State Reporting.....	5
4.1 Kiribati vessels	5
4.1.1 Annual catch estimates for the national longline fleet	5
Table 1. Annual catch estimates for the Kiribati longline fleet, by primary species and year, in the WCPFC Convention Area over 2021-2025.....	6
4.1.2 Historical annual catch estimates and efforts for the national longline fleet	7
4.1.3 Annual catch estimates for the national purse seine fleet.....	7
4.1.4 Historical annual catch estimates for the national purse seine fleet.....	8
4.1.5 Historical annual vessel numbers for the national fleet.....	8
4.1.7 Distribution of catches of target species for different national fisheries.	9
4.1.8 Captures of species of special interest (SSIs)	10
4.1.9 Annual catch estimates for non-target, associated and dependent species for the national longline fleet	13
4.1.10 Annual catch estimates for non-target, associated and dependent species for the national purse seine fleet.....	14
5 Coastal State Reporting.....	14
5.1 Licensed Vessel by Gear.....	15
5.2 Catch by Flag.....	15
6 Socio-economic factors	18
7 Disposal of Catch.....	18
8 Onshore Development	18
8.1 Processing Plant	18
8.2 Longline Vessel Project	19
9 Future Prospect of the Fishery	19
10 Status of Tuna Fishery Data Collection Systems	19
10.1 Logsheet Data Collection and Verification	19
10.2 Observer Programme	20
10.3 Biological Sampling Programme	20
10.4 Unloading / Transshipment	20
11 Research Activities Covering Target and Non-target Species.....	20

Table 1. Annual catch estimates for the Kiribati Longline fleet by primary species and year, in the Convention area, 2021-2025.....	6
Table 2. Annual raised catch estimates for the national Longline fleets for tuna and billfish by broad area for 2025.....	6
Table 3. Annual catch estimates for the Kiribati purse seine fleets by primary species and year, in the Convention area, 2021-2025.....	7
Table 4. Kiribati Longline vessels, by size category, active in the WCPFC Convention area, over 2021-2025.....	9
Table 5. Kiribati purse seine vessels by size category, active in the WCPFC Convention area, over 2021-2025.....	9
Table 6. Observed annual estimated catches of species of special interest by the Kiribati longline fleet, in the WCPFC Convention area, for years 2021-2025.....	11
Table 7. Observed annual estimated catches of species of special interest by the Kiribati purse seine fleet, in the WCPFC Convention area, for years 2021-2025.....	12
Table 8. Annual estimated catches for non-target, associated and dependent species, including sharks by the Kiribati longline fleet, in the WCPFC Convention area over 2021-2025.....	13
Table 9. Annual estimated catches of non-target, associated and dependent species, including sharks, by the Kiribati purse seine fleet, in the WCPFC Convention area over 2021-2025.....	14
Table 10. Annual vessels licensed by Kiribati 2021-2025.....	15
Table 11. Raised and unraised annual artisanal catch estimates in mt.....	18
Table 12. Percentage of the artisanal tuna ACE associated with each of the key species.....	18
Figure 1. Historical annual catch estimates (mt) and effort (no. of hooks) for the Kiribati longline fleet, by primary species and year, in the WCPFC Convention area over 2021-2025.....	7
Figure 2. Historical annual catch estimate (mt) and effort (trips) for the Kiribati purse seine fleet, by primary species and year, in the WCPFC Convention area over 2021-2025.....	8
Figure 3. Historical annual vessel numbers for the Kiribati fleet, by gear for the WCPFC Convention area over 2021-2025.....	8
Figure 4. Map showing the distribution of target species catch (mt) for the Kiribati longline fishery.....	9
Figure 5. Map showing the distribution of target species catch (mt) for the Kiribati purse seine fishery....	9
Figure 6. Depiction of annual licensed vessel by gear type 2021-2025.....	15
Figure 7. Depiction of annual catch by major fleet inside Kiribati EEZ 2021-2025.....	16
Figure 8. Catch of the three major tuna species by longline vessels fishing in the Kiribati EEZ.....	17
Figure 9. Catch of the three major tuna species by purse seine vessels fishing in the Kiribati EEZ.....	17
Figure 10. KFL staff and employment record 2013-2025.....	19

1. Abstract

Kiribati's tuna fisheries include small-scale artisanal fisheries using wooden skiffs (less than 7 m) within 12 nautical miles, as well as commercial and domestic purse seine, pole-and-line, and longline fisheries. Domestic purse seine and longline vessels operate under charter or joint venture arrangements. Foreign purse seine vessels also fish in Kiribati's EEZ under bilateral, regional, and multilateral access agreements. Support vessels, including tankers and reefers, are licensed under bilateral fishing agreements.

Annual catches by Kiribati's longline fleet have increased since 2021. In 2025, the fleet recorded a total catch of 23,027 mt, compared with 16,744 mt in 2024, representing an increase of approximately 37%. Catches by the domestic purse seine fleet have also generally increased since 2021. However, the total catch in 2025 declined by approximately 9% compared with the 2024 catch. The main species caught include skipjack tuna, which is primarily harvested for canning and local consumption, yellowfin, bigeye, and albacore tuna, which are targeted by the longline fishery for processing and export.

Kiribati's EEZ is accessed by foreign fishing fleets from Korea, Chinese Taipei, the EU and the United States under bilateral and regional fishing agreements, including the FSMA. Licensed vessels include purse seiners, longliners, tankers, and reefer carriers that support fishing operations. Bilateral fishing agreements are usually valid for one year.

The purse seine fishery is the main source of fisheries revenue for Kiribati, providing significant income to the Government through the Vessel Day Scheme (VDS). Transshipment activities also contribute to the economy.

Longline fishing in Kiribati's EEZ is carried out by joint venture companies, including Kiribati Fish Limited (KFL), Kiritimati Island Fish Limited (KIFL), and Kiribati Blue Pacific Limited (KBPL). KFL operates a processing plant in Betio, while other three companies are earmarking other fisheries related development both in Tarawa and Kiritimati Islands. Although there are no Japanese licensed pole and line vessels, it remains an important fishery for local employment, especially crewing and seafarers.

2. Tabular Annual Fisheries Information

This report provides annual catch estimates of tuna, non-target species and bycatch caught by Kiribati vessels for the period 2021-2025. Refer to the appended Tables and Figures.

3. Background

Kiribati's participation in commercial fisheries for highly migratory species in the WCPO is undertaken by domestic purse seine and longline vessels including small-scale artisanal troll fishery. Management of key tuna species is regulated under national laws, fishing agreement, license conditions, regulations, and policies including domesticated WCPFC Conservation and Management Measures.

3.1 Pole and Line

Kiribati has no national Pole and Line fishery in operation. There were Japanese pole and line vessels licensed by Kiribati in the past, but this is no longer the case.

3.2 Longline

Kiribati's EEZ is known for longline fishing targeting high-value tuna species. In the past, most operators were foreign companies licensed through bilateral access agreements, mainly from Japan, Korea, China, and Chinese Taipei. Longline fishing is mainly concentrated in the Phoenix and Line Islands in the east. In 2017, there was no longline fishing by distant water fishing nations (DWFNs) due to the change in Kiribati policy for the management of this fishery in its waters. Last year, (2025) the Government resumed longline fishery after completion of regulatory framework for this fishery.

3.3 Purse seine

Kiribati currently does not yet have the capacity to fully own and operate a purse seine fishery for harvesting and exporting tuna. The Government, through the Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean Resources (MFOR), has established joint ventures and charter arrangements with fishing partners to help develop the national tuna industry in the future. Current partners in these arrangements are Korea and China. Like other PNA members, Kiribati manages purse seine fishing in its waters through the Vessel Day Scheme, which applies across all fishing partners.

3.4 Troll and Vertical Hand Line

Artisanal fishing is part of Kiribati's tuna fishery and is mainly carried out by local fishermen. It focuses on catching tuna for local sales and domestic consumption. The main fishing methods are trolling for skipjack tuna and vertical handlining for bigeye and yellowfin tuna. The boats used are usually small wooden skiffs under 7 meters long, powered by 15–40 horsepower outboard engines.

4 Flag State Reporting

This section reports national fleets in the Convention Area by gear type, trends in fishing patterns, effort, targeted species, and vessel size composition.

4.1 Kiribati vessels

As stated in the introduction, Kiribati operates longline and purse seine fishery through joint venture and charter arrangement with Korea and Chinese fishing companies. These vessels are flagged under Kiribati and foreign flag especially longlines.

4.1.1 Annual catch estimates for the national longline fleet

There is an overall increase in the annual catch for Kiribati longline fleet since 2021. From 3,830 mt in 2021, the catch trend shows an upward trend in subsequent years with the highest catch recorded in 2025 of 23,027 mt – an increase of 38% from 2024 levels.

Species	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Albacore	1,055.8	1,046.2	2,710.5	6,564.6	5,641.7
Bigeye tuna	1,206.1	2,829.3	5,049.6	3,062.9	5,324.2
Black marlin	16.2	48.7	35.3	31.4	44.7

Blue marlin	101.3	155.2	312.7	831.9	751.1
Striped marlin	36.5	22.0	47.8	54.2	78.0
Pacific bluefin tuna	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	1.9
Skipjack tuna	56.6	81.8	91.4	978.2	753.4
Swordfish	143.7	383.0	313.5	174.0	681.9
Yellowfin tuna	1,214.7	2,719.4	2,790.9	5,047.0	9,750.8
Total	3,830.9	7,285.6	11,351.8	16,744.2	23,027.7

Table 1. Annual catch estimates for the Kiribati longline fleet, by primary species and year, in the WCPFC Convention Area over 2021-2025

Year	Species code	WCPFC Convention Area (S of Equator)	WCPFC Convention Area (N of Equator)	South Pacific Ocean	North Pacific Ocean	WCPO
2025	alb	5,584.01	34.69	10,373.98	30.96	3,753.22
2025	bet	4,757.48	682.57	4,708.15	600.66	5,061.48
2025	mls	69.97	6.54	130.88	5.56	0.00
2025	pbf	1.82	0.02	1.76	0.01	0.00
2025	skj	648.71	114.22	821.43	78.84	688.16
2025	swo	517.78	154.91	492.44	127.94	0.00
2025	yft	8,263.93	1,607.93	7,491.68	1,395.94	9,054.18

Table 2. Annual raised catch estimates for the national longline vessels, for tuna and billfish by Broad Ocean areas over 2025.

4.1.2 Historical annual catch estimates and efforts for the national longline fleet

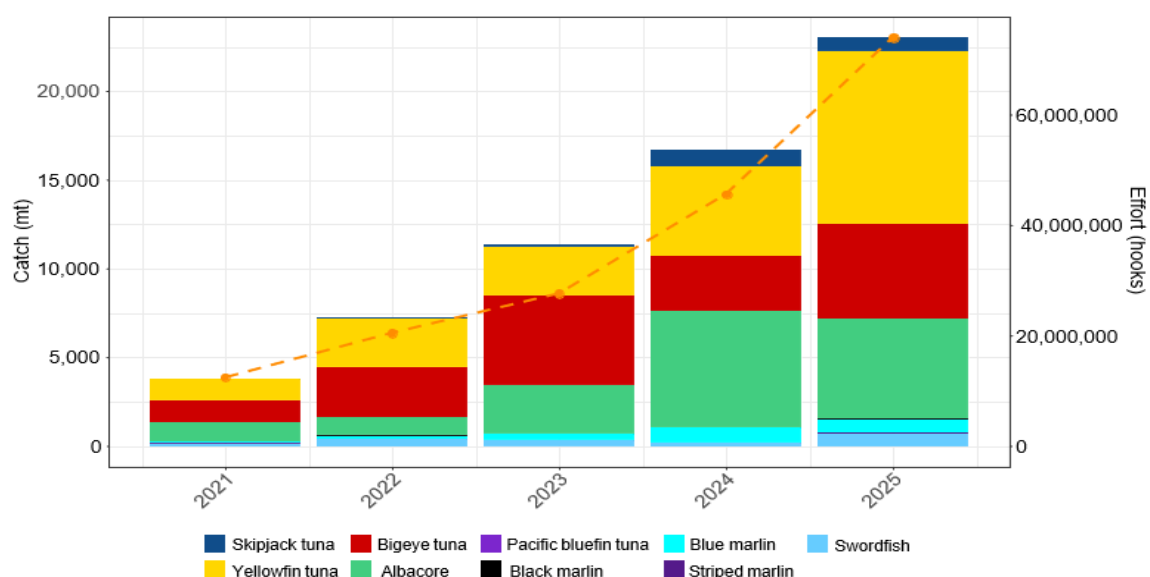


Figure 1: Historical annual catch estimates (mt) and effort (no. of hooks) for the Kiribati longline fleet, by primary species and year, in the WCPFC Convention Area over 2021-2025.

4.1.3 Annual catch estimates for the national purse seine fleet.

Kiribati's flag purse seine vessels for the past 5 years caught a total of 1,117,030.90 mt of tuna at an average of 223,406.18 mt per year. The average breakdown of catches by species are; SKJ at 197,158.08 mt, YFT at 23,235.20 mt and BET at 3,012.90 mt per year.

Species	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Albacore	0.0	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.0
Bigeye tuna	2,074.7	1,582.8	1,821.9	1,687.9	7,897.2
Skipjack tuna	161,444.0	183,040.2	216,295.6	238,497.0	186,513.6
Yellowfin tuna	24,659.9	12,074.0	20,568.1	17,996.4	40,877.6
Total	188,178.6	196,697.0	238,687.8	258,181.3	235,288.4

Table 3. Annual catch estimates for the Kiribati purse seine fleet, by primary species and year, in the WCPFC Convention Area over 2021-2025

4.1.4 Historical annual catch estimates for the national purse seine fleet.

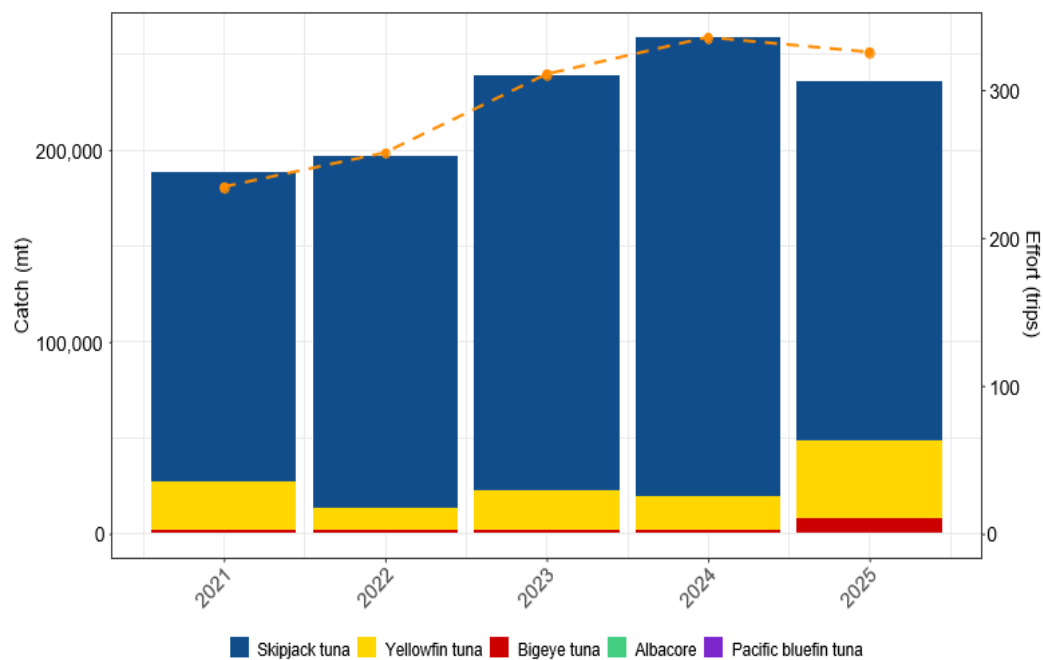


Figure 2: Historical annual catch estimates (mt) and effort (trips) for the Kiribati purse seine fleet, by primary species and year, in the WCPFC Convention Area over 2021-2025

4.1.5 Historical annual vessel numbers for the national fleet

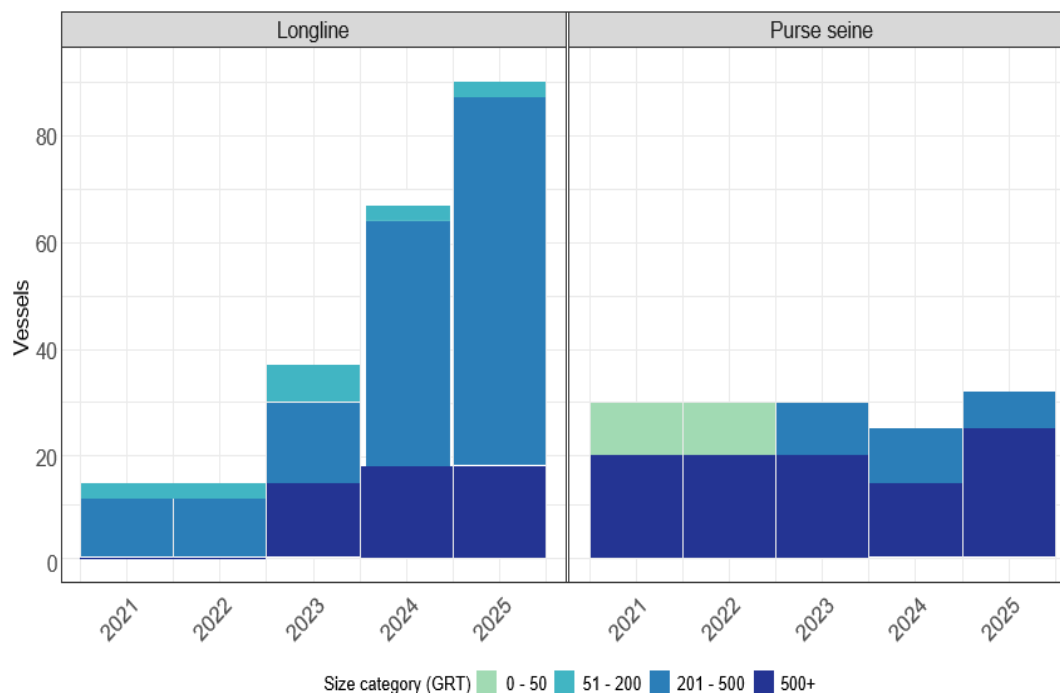


Figure 3: Historical annual vessel numbers for the Kiribati fleet, by gear, for the WCPFC Convention Area over 2021-2025

4.1.6 Number of active longline vessels by size category over recent years.

gear	Size Category (GRT)	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Longline	0 - 50	0	0	0	0	0
	51 - 200	3	3	7	3	3
	201 - 500	11	11	14	46	71
	500+	2	2	16	18	18

Table 4: Kiribati longline vessels, by size category, active in the WCPFC Convention Area, over 2021-2025

gear	Size Category (GRT)	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Purse seine	0 - 50	11	11	0	0	0
	51 - 200	0	0	0	0	0
	201 - 500	0	0	11	11	7
	500+	19	19	19	14	25

Table 5: Kiribati purse seine vessels, by size category, active in the WCPFC Convention Area, over 2021-2025

4.1.7 Distribution of catches of target species for different national fisheries.

Spatial patterns in catch for the longline fishery.

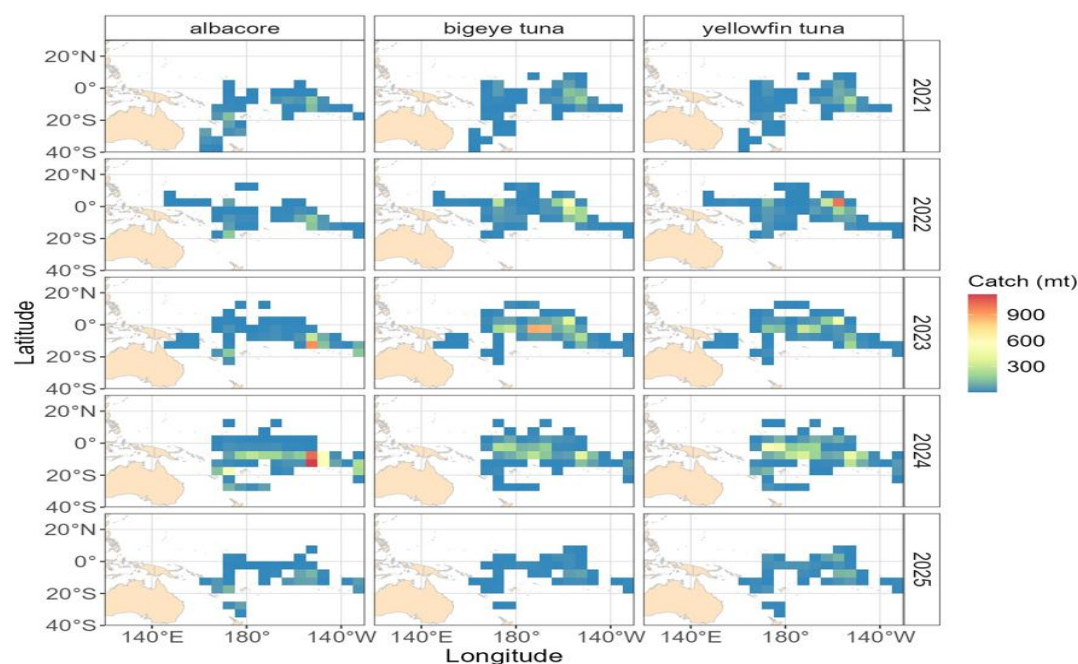


Figure 4: Map showing the distribution of target species catch (mt) for the Kiribati longline fishery.

Spatial patterns in catch for the purse seine fishery

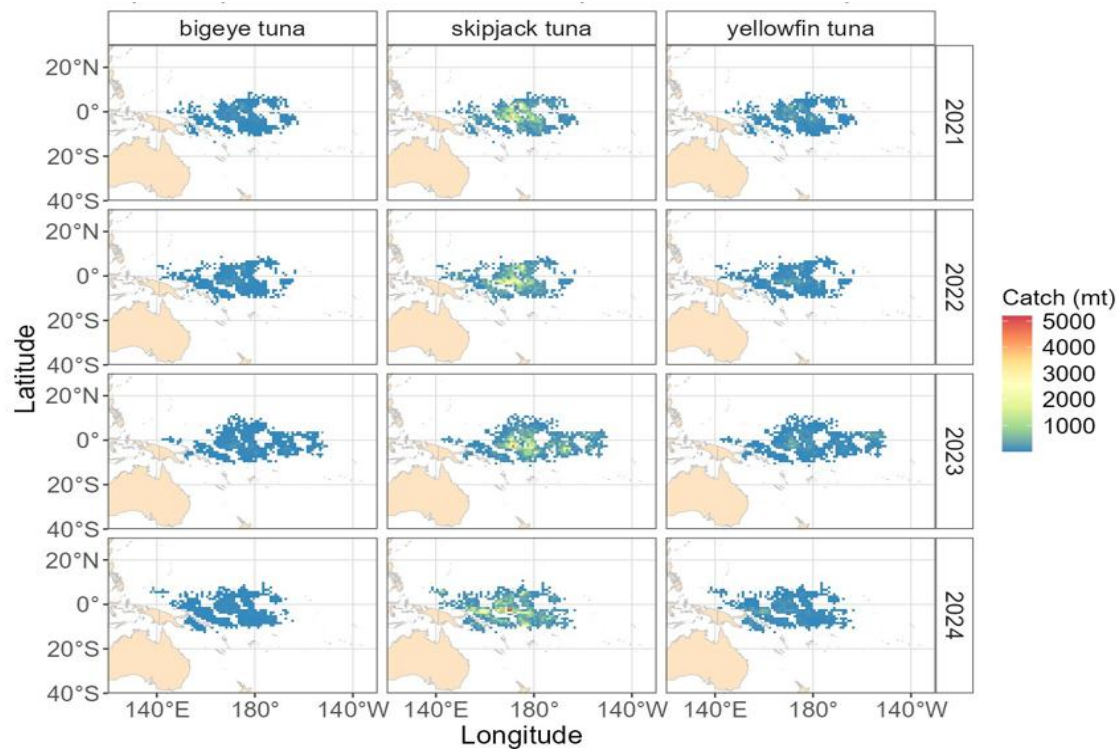


Figure 5: Map showing the distribution of target species catch (mt) for the Kiribati purse seine fishery.

4.1.8 Captures of species of special interest (SSIs)

Note that the tables below are specified to include SSI species such as seabird, turtle and marine mammals in the report format but other species like some rays and sharks are also included. Note that Alive plus Dead does not necessarily equal Total due to unknowns.

Observed catches of SSIs by the longline fleet

Year	Category	Species	Total	Alive	Dead
2023	marine reptiles	leatherback turtle	4	4	0
2023	rays	spinetail mobula	19	19	0
2024	birds	albatrosses nei	1	0	1

2024	birds	gulls - terns and skuas	2	0	2
2024	marine mammals	pantropical spotted dolphin	1	1	0
2024	marine reptiles	green turtle	1	1	0
2024	marine reptiles	leatherback turtle	1	1	0
2024	marine reptiles	olive ridley turtle	2	0	2
2024	rays	giant manta	1	1	0
2024	rays	manta rays	2	2	0
2024	rays	mobula	1	1	0
2024	rays	spinetail mobula	24	23	1
2024	whale shark	whale shark	1	1	0

Table 6: Observed annual estimated catches of species of special interest (seabird, turtle, and marine mammals) by the Kiribati longline fleet, in the WCPFC Convention Area, for years 2021-2025

Observed catches of SSIs by the purse seine

2022	rays	giant manta	1	0	0
2023	marine mammals	baleen whales nei	2	2	0
2023	marine mammals	bottlenose dolphin	28	28	0
2023	marine mammals	bryde's whale	10	9	0
2023	marine mammals	false killer whale	67	66	0
2023	marine mammals	sei whale	8	8	0
2023	marine mammals	spinner dolphin	26	26	0
2023	marine reptiles	flatback turtle	1	1	0
2023	marine reptiles	green turtle	3	3	0
2023	marine reptiles	leatherback turtle	1	1	0
2023	marine reptiles	loggerhead turtle	3	3	0
2023	marine reptiles	olive ridley turtle	6	6	0
2023	rays	giant manta	208	65	5
2023	rays	mantas, devil rays nei	5	0	0

2023	rays	mobula	212	111	25
2023	whale shark	whale shark	7	4	0
2024	marine mammals	bryde's whale	1	1	0
2024	marine mammals	false killer whale	79	70	0
2024	marine mammals	long-beaked common dolphin	2	2	0
2024	marine mammals	sei whale	1	1	0
2024	marine mammals	spectacled porpoise	4	0	0
2024	marine reptiles	green turtle	3	3	0
2024	marine reptiles	hawksbill turtle	1	1	0
2024	marine reptiles	loggerhead turtle	5	5	0
2024	marine reptiles	olive ridley turtle	3	3	0
2024	rays	giant manta	137	49	5
2024	rays	mantas, devil rays nei	15	0	0
2024	rays	mobula	190	52	0
2024	whale shark	whale shark	9	9	0
2025	marine mammals	bryde's whale	1	1	0
2025	marine mammals	false killer whale	3	3	0
2025	marine reptiles	green turtle	1	1	0
2025	rays	giant manta	107	34	9
2025	rays	mantas, devil rays nei	2	0	1
2025	rays	mobula	81	35	11
2025	whale shark	whale shark	1	1	0

Table 7: Observed annual estimated catches of species of special interest (seabird, turtle and marine mammals) by the Kiribati purse seine fleet, in the WCPFC Convention Area, for years 2021-2025, to the extent possible.

Note that the Total may not reflect the sum of Alive and Dead as some animals are reported with an Unknown status.

4.1.9 Annual catch estimates for non-target, associated and dependent species for the national longline fleet

Species	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Black marlin	16.2	48.7	35.3	31.4	44.7
Blue shark	78.2	12.1	75.9	225.1	1,096.5
Blue marlin	101.3	155.2	312.7	831.9	751.1
Silky shark	2.4	9.8	11.1	66.1	370.3
Mako sharks (mak)	0.0	1.9	0.6	1.1	26.5
Striped marlin	36.5	22.0	47.8	54.2	78.0
Oceanic whitetip shark	1.9	28.9	6.7	46.4	291.3
Whale shark	0.0	0.0	1.6	0.5	0.7
Sailfish	19.4	21.8	0.0	67.7	66.9
Hammerhead sharks (spn)	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.3
Shortbill spearfish	2.8	0.8	0.0	6.0	12.3
Swordfish	143.7	383.0	313.5	174.0	681.9
Thresher sharks (thr)	1.6	0.6	1.7	6.0	8.7

Table 8: Annual estimated catches of non-target, associated and dependent species, including sharks, by the Kiribati longline fleet, in the WCPFC Convention Area over 2021-2025

4.1.10 Annual catch estimates for non-target, associated and dependent species for the national purse seine fleet

Species	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Black marlin	3.2	10.6	17.6	13.9	13.7
Blue shark	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0
Blue marlin	3.3	64.9	45.0	40.1	28.4
Silky shark	49.7	95.7	162.8	159.0	155.8
Mako sharks (mak)	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.0
Striped marlin	0.0	0.0	7.0	4.0	2.5
Oceanic whitetip shark	0.6	5.5	7.8	9.3	9.2
Whale shark	0.0	0.0	1.0	50.9	29.0
Sailfish	0.2	0.5	0.0	1.2	0.5
Hammerhead sharks (spn)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1
Shortbill spearfish	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Swordfish	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.1	0.1
Thresher sharks (thr)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	4.9

Table 9. Annual estimated catches of non-target, associated and dependent species, including sharks, by the Kiribati purse seine fleet, in the WCPFC Convention Area over 2021-2025.

5 Coastal State Reporting

The number of vessels licensed in 2025 was 338, which is a drop by 37 vessels from last year 2024 of 375 vessels which is the highest for the five-year period. The least number of vessels licensed in Kiribati is 248 which is 2022. Annual fluctuation in licensed vessels is mainly due to changes in the number of licensed vessels from one year to another.

Year	Bunker	Reefer Carrier	Longline	Purse seine	Others	Total
2021	14	75	39	213	0	341
2022	11	62	44	131	0	248
2023	14	74	71	118	0	277
2024	15	74	84	201	0	374
2025	14	73	115	135	1	338
Total	68	358	353	798	1	1578

Table 10. Annual vessels licensed by Kiribati, 2021-2025. 'Others' refer to SPC research vessel.

5.1 Licensed Vessel by Gear

The majority of DWFN's licensed vessels by Kiribati come from Asian countries (Korea, Chinese-Taipei, China, Philippines), the EU, the United States and PNA fleets operating under the Federated States of Micronesia arrangement (FSMA). Fishing activities in Kiribati waters is regulated through national laws, regional and multilateral arrangement in the case of the US fleets.

The Government allows four main fishing gears: purse seine, longline, and support vessels such as tankers and reefer carriers. Although tankers and carriers are not catching vessels, they are referred to as fishing vessels under the Fisheries Act 2010 (as amended). Management conditions differ depending on the type of gear.

Kiribati fishery is predominantly purse seine by gear type for it accounts to 51% on average for vessels licensed from 2021-25. The bulk of which comes from Korea, Chinese-Taipei, and the United States.

Longline vessel numbers reached 115 in 2025. The fishery has increased since 2021, when there were 44 vessels. It rose to 71 vessels in 2023 and 84 vessels in 2024. This growth is mainly due to increase charter longline operations under joint venture companies particularly KFL and KIFL.

Support vessels such as tankers and carriers have remained relatively stable since 2021. Tankers average about 14 vessels, while carriers dropped to around 62 in 2022 before increasing to 74 in both 2023 and 2024. Most reefer carriers are registered under the Panama flag. There are also research vessels (mostly from SPC) conducting research activities in Kiribati's EEZ in 2024 and 2025. Overall, licensed vessel numbers show a slight increase, especially after 2022, with most fluctuations driven by purse seine and longline licensed each year.

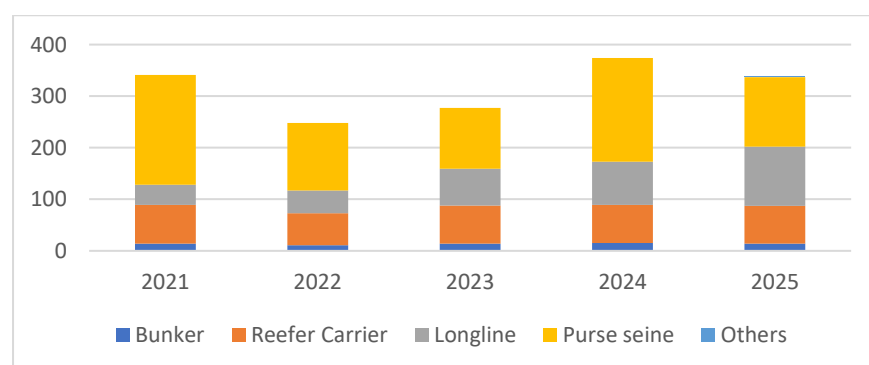


Figure 6. Depiction of annual licensed vessel by gear type, 2021-2025.

5.2 Catch by Flag.

Figure 7 illustrates annual catch by major fishing fleets inside Kiribati EEZ for the period 2021-2025. Apart from catch by national fleet, other major fishing fleet include Korea, Chinese-Taipei and the United States. Total catch by most fleets was high in 2023 but some decline observed for other years, 2021, 2022 and 2025 due in part to a general reduction of the purse

seine catch for the WCPFC area, and a move of the main fishery to the west under La Nina conditions.

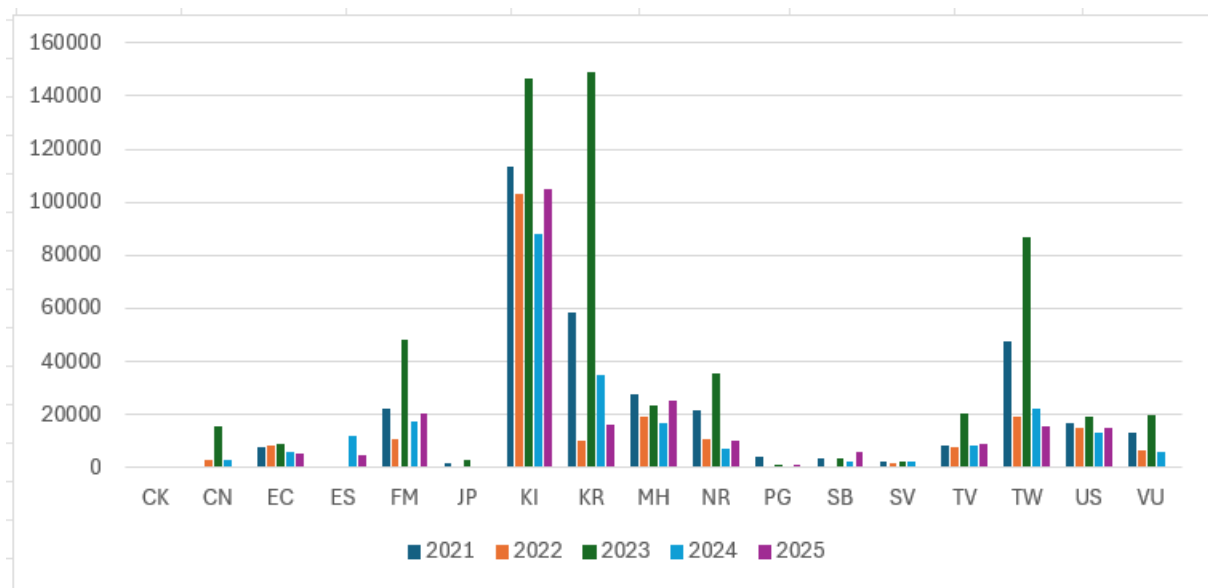


Figure 7. Depiction of annual catch by major fleet inside Kiribati EEZ, 2021-2025

Fishing activities of licensed vessels are managed through access agreements and license conditions specific to each gear type. This applies to both foreign and domestic vessels. However, domestic and charter vessels have special arrangements with the Government of Kiribati, including access to the Domestic Fishing Zone (DFZ), which is closed to vessels licensed under bilateral agreements, as well as FAD exemptions and other concessions.

All Kiribati flag vessels are also prohibited from transshipping on the High Seas, the EEZ, fishing in closed areas, and targeting protected species such as sharks under the Shark Regulations.

Fishing effort is influenced by climate conditions and the movement of fish stocks within national waters and licensed areas. This determines where fishing takes place from time to time and the variability and fishing in Kiribati EEZ, other EEZs and the rest of the Convention area.

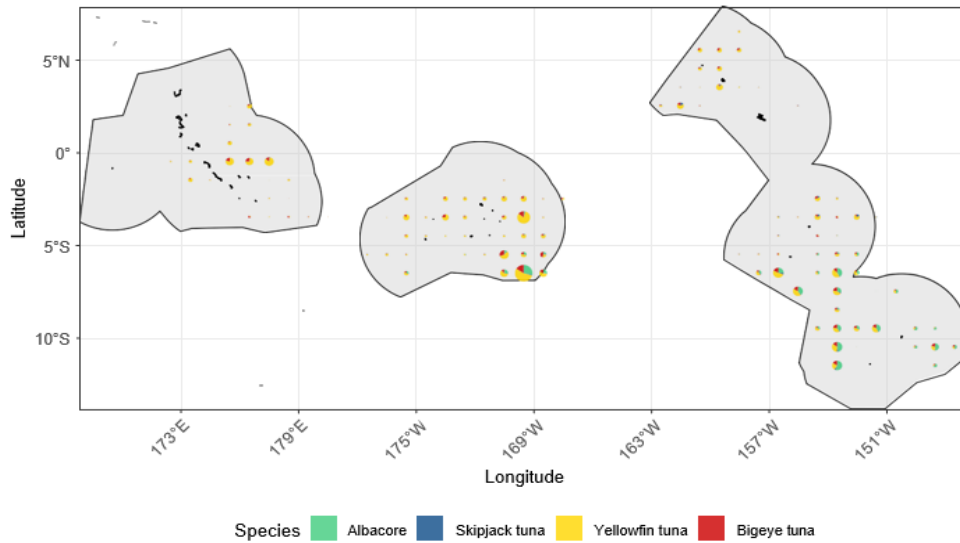


Figure 8. Catch of the three main tuna species by longline vessels fishing in the Kiribati EEZ in each 1x1 degree cell in the EEZ and the immediate surrounding area during 2025.

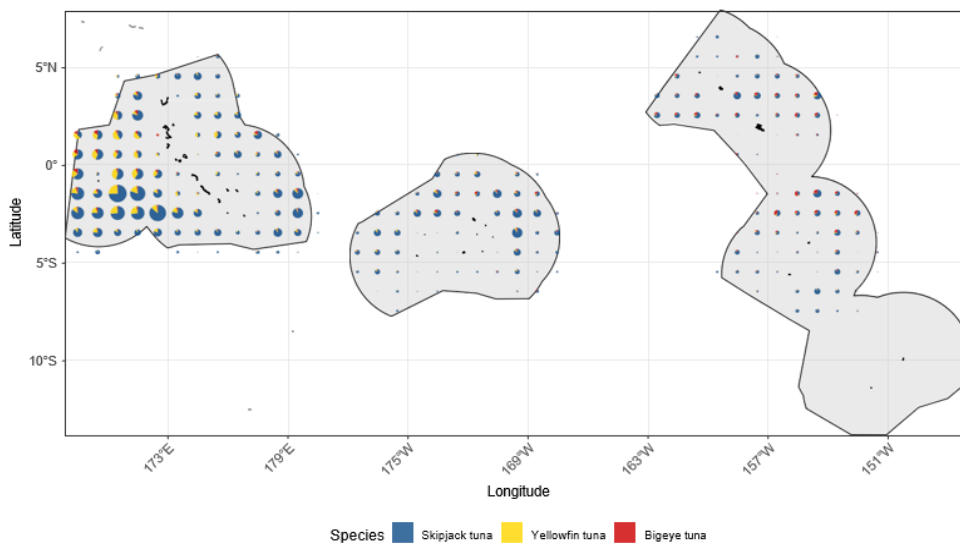


Figure 9. Catch of the three main tuna species by purse seine vessels fishing in the Kiribati EEZ, in each 1x1 degree cell in the EEZ and the immediate surrounding area during 2025.

5.3. Annual catch estimates – artisanal

Table 11 presents the raised and unraised estimates per species for 2025, and Table 12 shows the percentage contribution of each species. Data is sourced from Tails and Ikasavea (landing surveys). Raised estimates are calculated based on the local knowledge of average monthly trips per landing site.

Method	BET	SKJ	YFT
raised	0.01	1.06	0.98

unraised	0.01	1.06	0.98
----------	------	------	------

Table 11. Raised and unraised annual artisanal catch estimates in mt

Method	BET	SKJ	YFT
raised	0.49	51.71	47.8
unraised	0.49	51.71	47.8

Table 12. Percentage of the artisanal tuna ACE associated with each of the key species.

6 Socio-economic factors

Recent domestication of a tuna industry has changed the way Kiribati negotiates access and licensed fishing vessels in its waters. This is exemplified by exit of DWFN longline after closure of the longline fishery for foreign vessels in 2017 and exemptions granted to joint venture vessels to fish inside Kiribati domestic fishing zones.

7 Disposal of Catch

In-port transshipment is required for all licensed purse seine vessels. This helps improve catch monitoring, reduce IUU fishing risks, and generate economic benefits from transshipment activities. In addition, Kiribati flagged longline and carrier vessels are prohibited to transship at sea.

Under special access arrangements, some foreign fishing vessels are encouraged to land part of their catch to KFL. These include fresh tuna from longliners and frozen tuna from purse seiners. The landed fish is processed into loins and fillets for export to markets such as Japan, the United States, the EU, New Zealand, Australia, Vietnam, Hong Kong, and the Philippines.

Lower-grade tuna and bycatch species are sold locally at cheaper prices for domestic consumption.

8 Onshore Development

8.1 Processing Plant

KFL is the only fishing company in Kiribati with a processing facility. It is a joint venture between the Government of Kiribati, Golden Ocean (Fiji), and Zhejiang Ocean Family (China), established in 2010. The company operates mainly in the longline fishery, producing fresh and loin products for overseas markets, and is based in Betio, Tarawa, where it also provides local employment.

Employment at KFL has changed over time. Staff numbers increased from 50 in 2013 to 262 in 2018, then declined to 212 in 2020–2021. It rose slightly to about 220 in 2022, dropped to 150 in 2023, and then increased again to 258 in the most recent year.

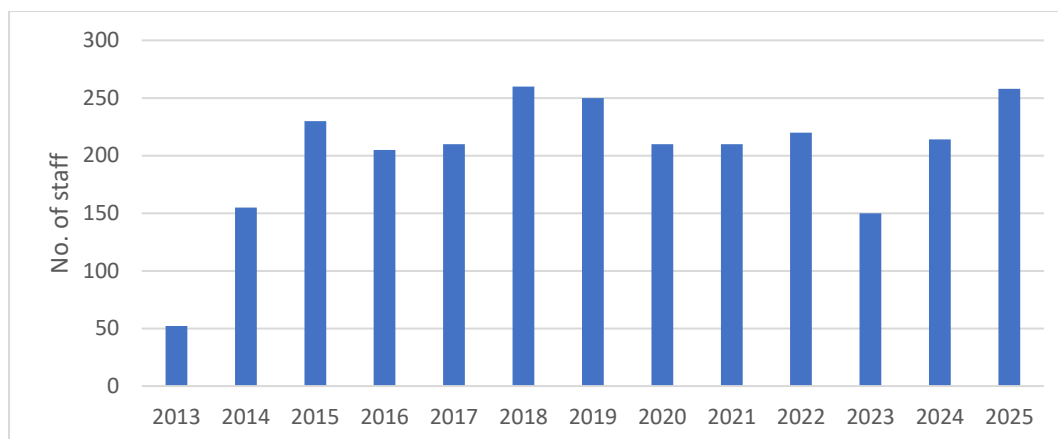


Figure 10. KFL staff and employment record, 2013-2025.

Apart from its processing plant, KFL also owns equipment such as side-lifters, crane trucks, and chilled vehicles to support fish handling and export. The company also provides services to local fishermen, including fishing gear, fuel, bait, spare parts, and ice.

The expansion of KFL operations and support facilities is expected to increase future export volumes. KIFL has recently been established with its main office in Kiritimati Island, and a new operating facility in Ambo, Tarawa, supports its operations and staff accommodation. KIFL's purse seine and longline fleets are currently in operation.

8.2 Longline Vessel Project

The Government purchased three small-scale longline vessels in 2019 to increase domestic tuna production, strengthen the local fishing industry, and improve access to export markets through KFL. The initiative was intended to support the development and expansion of the domestic longline fishery. However, the vessels are no longer operational following a shift in government priorities and the reallocation of resources to other strategic development areas.

9 Future Prospect of the Fishery

The Government aims to increase the economic benefits from the tuna industry by promoting value-added products, creating more employment opportunities, and encouraging licensed vessels to employ local crew. Achieving these goals requires effective fisheries management, strong enforcement, and the protection of valuable tuna and other fish stocks. Integrating fisheries information into a centralized database will also strengthen monitoring, conservation, and the sustainable management of fishery resources.

10 Status of Tuna Fishery Data Collection Systems

10.1 Logsheet Data Collection and Verification

Logsheet collection and verification remain ongoing activities of the Fisheries Division. The recent recruitment of a Compliance Officer has improved monitoring and compliance with Commission requirements and Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs). Logsheets are submitted by fishing companies, vessel operators, and observers, while timely reporting is enforced through license conditions. However, improvements to the data management system are still needed to address gaps in observer, transshipment, and other fisheries data.

10.2 Observer Programme

Observers play an important role in monitoring fishing activities and deterring illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Current observer coverage is 100% for purse seine vessels and 5% for longline vessels, reflecting the different operating conditions of each fishery. Kiribati remains committed to fulfilling the WCPFC observer requirement of 100% on purse seine fishery and more than 5% on longline fishery in 2025.

10.3 Biological Sampling Programme

Kiribati signs an MOU with the SPC in 2024 to support the continuous collection of high-quality biological samples and data from the WCPO. To date, there has been coordinated sampling training conducted in Tarawa and one expected in Kiritimati later this year. Kiribati remains committed to the programme to ensure fish stock are well assessed.

10.4 Unloading / Transshipment

Transshipment was conducted in port between licensed purse seine vessels and carrier vessels. Activity increases when fishing favors Kiribati waters, especially during El Niño years. Since Kiribati has no canning factory, purse seine catch is usually transshipped overseas. Recently, the Government required licensed vessels to land a portion of high-value tuna to Kiribati Fish Limited (KFL) to support local processing. All landing and export data are kept by KFL.

10.5 Electronic Monitoring

Kiribati is trialing Electronic Monitoring this year with a view to strengthen catch reporting by Kiribati flagged longline vessels. With the support of the World Bank, the FFA, the SPC, and MRAG Asia, Kiribati is able to install cameras on 2 Kiribati longline vessels earlier this year. Data is being collected from these longline vessels, and technical training on reviewing data is ongoing. Kiribati appreciates further assistance from the Secretariat in this area.

11 Research Activities Covering Target and Non-target Species.

As a member of the WCPFC, Kiribati supports oceanic research and scientific tuna stock assessment by issuing licences to research vessels operating within its EEZ. Previously, a national tagging officer was appointed as a counterpart to SPC to support tuna tagging activities; however, this position has been discontinued due to the absence of dedicated funding.

Addendum to Annual Part I Report

Section A

CMM 2009-03 [Swordfish], Para 8

CCMs shall report to the Commission the total number of vessels that fished for swordfish and the total catch of swordfish for the following:

- a. vessels flying their flag anywhere in the Convention Area south of 20°S other than vessels operating under charter, lease or other similar mechanism as part of the domestic fishery of another CCM;
- b. vessels operating under charter, lease or other similar mechanism as part of their domestic fishery south of 20°S; and
- c. any other vessels fishing within their waters south of 20°S.

flag	year	vessels	swo_n	swo_mt
KI	2021	4	40	2
KI	2022	0	0	0
KI	2023	4	0	0
KI	2024	6	39	2
KI	2025	3	51	3

Table 11: Total number of vessels fishing for swordfish and the catch (mt) of swordfish south of 20S.

This information shall be provided in Part 1 of each CCM's annual report. Initially, this information will be provided in the template provided at Annex 2 for the period 2000-2009 and then updated annually.

** Note: WCPFC11 confirmed a common understanding that "total catch" in this reporting requirement refers to both targeted and bycatch catches of swordfish.*

AUDIT POINT [RP] The Secretariat confirms that the CCM submitted the required information contained in the template in Annex 2 of CMM in its AR Pt 1.

Observer coverage (WCPFC11 decision - para 484(b))

CCMs are to compile and include in Annual Report Part 1 to be submitted from 2015 onwards, observer coverage for their longline fleet activity in the previous calendar year, noting that revisions can be provided at the annual TCC meeting.

A sample report format is provided as guidance to assist CCMs with reporting (WCPFC11 Summary Report Attachment L Table 4).

			Hooks			Fishing days			Sea days			Trips		
year	flag	gear	hooks	obs	cov %	fish days	obs	cov %	sea days	obs	cov %	trips	obs	cov %
2025	KI	L	797,469	7,948	1	24,706	131	0.5	27,408	210	0.8	314	6	1.9

Table 12: Observer coverage of longline fleet activity where hooks are in hundred hooks from logbook data and fishing days, sea days, and trips are all calculated from VMS data. Coverage percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

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

CCMs shall report on all transshipment activities covered by this Measure (including transshipment activities that occur in ports or EEZs) as part of their Annual Report in accordance with the guidelines at Annex II. In doing so, CCMs shall take all reasonable steps to validate and where possible, correct information received from vessels undertaking transshipment using all available information such as catch and effort data, position data, observer reports and port monitoring data.

WCPFC15 Outcome document para 48: The Commission agreed to the TCC14 recommendation that the template provided in TCC14-2018-RP03 Annex 3 be used by all applicable CCMs for their future reporting in Annual Report Part 1, as per CMM 2009-06 paragraph 11 (Attachment O of WCPFC15). **Annex 3 of RP03: Transshipment information to be provided annually by CCMs as required by CMM 2009-06 paragraph 11 in accordance with the guidelines in Annex II of the measure.**

Each CCM shall include in Part 1 of its Annual Report to the Commission:

- (1) the **total quantities, by weight**, of highly migratory fish stocks covered by this measure that were transshipped by fishing vessels the CCM is responsible for reporting against, with those quantities broken down by:
 - a. offloaded and received;
 - b. transshipped in port, transshipped at sea in areas of national jurisdiction, and transshipped beyond areas of national jurisdiction;
 - c. transshipped inside the Convention Area and transshipped outside the Convention Area;
 - d. caught inside the Convention Area and caught outside the Convention Area;

- e. species;
- f. product form; and
- g. Fishing gear used

No Data reported in 2025

- (2) the number of transshipments involving highly migratory fish stocks covered by this measure by fishing vessels for which the CCM is responsible for reporting, broken down by:
 - a. offloaded and received;
 - b. transshipped in port, transshipped at sea in areas of national jurisdiction, and transshipped beyond areas of national jurisdiction;
 - c. transshipped inside the Convention Area and transshipped outside the Convention Area;
 - d. caught inside the Convention Area and caught outside the Convention Area; and
 - e. fishing gear

No data reported in 2025.

AUDIT POINT [RP] The Secretariat confirms receipt by the CCM in AR Pt 1 of the required information in the prescribed format contained at Annex II of CMM 2009-06, and confirms that the report includes the required information for all CCM transshipment events in the Convention Area of all HMFS covered by the Convention, as well as HMFS taken in the Convention Area and transshipped outside the Convention Area, in accordance with paras 10,1, and 12 of CMM 2009-06.

CMM 2011-03 [Impact of PS fishing on cetaceans], Para 5

CCMs shall include in their Part 1 Annual Report any instances in which cetaceans have been encircled by the purse seine nets of their flagged vessels, reported under paragraph 2(b).

AUDIT POINT [RP] Secretariat confirms that CCM submitted a report on instances in which cetaceans have been encircled by the purse seine nets of flagged vessels and as reported in ARPt1 under para 2(b) of CMM.

flag	date	lat	lon	eez	species	number fate
KI	15/05/2025	0010.144S	14818.457E	PG	BRYDE'S WHALE	1 Released
KI	11/10/2025	0141.296N	16915.420E	GL	ROUGH- TOOTHED DOLPHIN	10 Released
KI	16/05/2025	0005.332S	14852.279E	PG	BRYDE'S WHALE	2 Released

Table 13: Summary of the number of cetacean encirclements by purse seine nets in reporting year.

CMM 2018-3 [Seabirds], Para 13

CCMs shall annually provide to the Commission, in Part 1 of their annual reports, all available information on interactions with seabirds reported or collected by observers to enable the estimation of seabird mortality in all fisheries to which the Convention applies (see below for Part 1 reporting template guideline). These reports shall include information on:

1. the proportion of observed effort with specific mitigation measures used; and
2. observed and reported species-specific seabird bycatch rates and numbers or statistically rigorous estimates of species-specific seabird interaction rates (for longline, interactions per 1,000 hooks) and total numbers

Table(s) x (by area)

year	flag_id	nb_vessel	hhooks	hhooks_obs	n_birds	capture_rate
2021	ki	16	124,294	3,814	0	0.0000
2022	ki	16	205,088	5,019	0	0.0000
2023	ki	37	276,462	16,402	0	0.0000
2024	ki	67	456,239	28,514	3	0.0011
2025	ki	92	740,145	4,083	0	0.0000

Table 14: This table shows total longline effort in vessels and hundred hooks, observed effort in hundred hooks, number of seabird captures, capture rate (# seabirds/1000 hooks), and number of seabird captures by area.

year	flag_id	nb_vessel	hhooks	hhooks_obs	n_birds	capture_rate
2021	ki	16	1,825	0	0	0
2022	ki	16	0	0	0	0
2023	ki	37	0	0	0	0
2024	ki	67	0	0	0	0
2025	ki	92	709	0	0	0

Table 15: Reported longline activity (hundred hooks and number of vessels), observed (hundred) hooks, number of seabird captures, and the capture rate (# seabirds/1000 hooks), by year in the area south of 30S.

year	flag_id	nb_vessel	hhooks	hhooks_obs	n_birds	capture_rate
2021	ki	16	4,796	0	0	0
2022	ki	16	0	0	0	0
2023	ki	37	0	0	0	0
2024	ki	67	6,440	0	0	0
2025	ki	92	10,579	0	0	0

Table 16: Reported longline activity (hundred hooks and number of vessels), observed (hundred) hooks, number of seabird captures, and the capture rate (# seabirds/1000 hooks), by year in the area between 30S and 25S.

year	flag_id	nb_vessel	hhooks	hhooks_obs	n_birds	capture_rate
2021	ki	16	117,672	3,814		0.0000
2022	ki	16	205,088	5,019		0.0000
2023	ki	37	276,462	16,402	0	0.0000
2024	ki	67	449,799	26,985	3	0.0011
2025	ki	92	728,856	4,083		0.0000

Table 17: Reported longline activity (hundred hooks and number of vessels), observed (hundred) hooks, number of seabird captures, and the capture rate (# seabirds/1000 hooks), by year in the area between 25S and 23N.

year	flag_id	nb_vessel	hhooks	hhooks_obs	n_birds	capture_rate
2021	ki	16	0	0	0	0
2022	ki	16	0	0	0	0
2023	ki	37	0	0	0	0
2024	ki	67	0	0	0	0
2025	ki	92	0	0	0	0

Table 18: Reported longline activity (hundred hooks and number of vessels), observed (hundred) hooks, number of seabird captures, and the capture rate (# seabirds/1000 hooks), by year in the area north of 23N.

Table(s) y (by area)

year	fleet	reqs	mitigation	sets	percent
2025	KI	4. Other combination	MOD	0	0
2025	KI	4. Other combination	No Mitigation	0	0
2025	KI	4. Other combination	NS	0	0
2025	KI	4. Other combination	NS MOD	0	0

Table 19: Proportion of mitigation types used by the fleet in reporting year, in the area south of 30S.

year	fleet	reqs	mitigation	sets	percent
2025	KI	4. Other combination	MOD	0	0
2025	KI	4. Other combination	No Mitigation	0	0
2025	KI	4. Other combination	NS	0	0
2025	KI	4. Other combination	NS MOD	0	0

Table 20: Proportion of mitigation types used by the fleet in reporting year, in the area between 30S and 25S.

year	fleet	reqs	mitigation	sets	percent
2025	KI	4. Other combination	MOD	18	15.3
2025	KI	4. Other combination	No Mitigation	74	62.7
2025	KI	4. Other combination	NS	24	20.3
2025	KI	4. Other combination	NS MOD	2	1.7

Table 21: Proportion of mitigation types used by the fleet in the reporting year, in the area between 25S and south of 23N.

year	fleet	reqs	mitigation	sets	percent
2025	KI	4. Other combination	MOD	0	0
2025	KI	4. Other combination	No Mitigation	0	0

year	fleet	reqs	mitigation	sets	percent
2025	KI	4. Other combination	NS	0	0
2025	KI	4. Other combination	NS MOD	0	0

Table 22: Proportion of mitigation types used by the fleet in the reporting year, in the area north of 23N.

Table z

AUDIT POINT [RP] The Secretariat confirms that CCM submitted a report using the reporting template in Annex 2 of CMM 2018-03 on seabird interactions reported or collected by observers.

Section B

CMM 2006-04 [Southwest Pacific striped marlin], Para 4

In accordance with paragraph 1, CCMs shall provide information to the Commission, by 1 July 2007, on the number of their vessels that have fished for striped marlin in the Convention area south of 15°S, during the period 2000–2004, and in doing so, nominate the maximum number of vessels that shall continue to be permitted to fish for striped marlin in the area south of 15°S. CCMs shall report annually to the Commission the catch levels of their fishing vessels that have taken striped marlin as a bycatch as well as the number and catch levels of vessels fishing for striped marlin in the Convention Area south of 15°S.

flag	year	vessels	num	weight_kg
KI	2,021	14	70	2.8
KI	2,022	10	36	1.6
KI	2,023	23	232	10.0
KI	2,024	35	802	28.2
KI	2,025	37	1,570	70.5

Table 23: There is currently no agreed definition of “fishing for” striped marlin, therefore, this table summarizes all longline vessels fishing south of 15S and all associated catch of striped marlin.

CMM 2015-02 [South Pacific Albacore] Para 4

CCMs shall report annually to the Commission the annual catch levels taken by each of their fishing vessels that has taken South Pacific albacore, as well as the number of vessels actively fishing for South Pacific albacore, in the Convention area south of 20°S. Catch by vessel shall be reported according to the following species groups: albacore tuna, bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, swordfish, other billfish, and sharks. Initially this information will be provided for the period 2006-2014 and then updated annually. CCMs are encouraged to provide data from periods prior to these dates.

WCPFC20 Outcome: The Commission agreed that the term “actively fishing for” used in CMM 2015-02 is applied to: ‘Vessels fishing south of 20 degrees South with an annual catch of albacore in that area with South Pacific albacore greater than 50% of the catch of potential target tuna (albacore, yellowfin and bigeye, southern bluefin, skipjack) and swordfish.’

Addressed through the regular provision of operational catch/effort logsheet data to SPC, who automatically include these data in the WCPFC database, as per our authorization.

AUDIT POINT [RP] The Secretariat confirms that the CCM submitted information on annual catch levels by its flagged vessels taking SP Albacore, as well as the number of CCM flagged vessels actively fishing for SP Albacore south of 20S, with catch levels reported by species groups.

CMM 2019-03 [North Pacific Albacore], Para 3

All CCMs shall report annually to the WCPFC Commission all catches of albacore north of the equator and all fishing effort north of the equator in fisheries directed at albacore. The reports for both catch and fishing effort shall be made by gear type. Catches shall be reported in terms of weight. Fishing effort shall be reported in terms of the most relevant measures for a given gear type, including at a minimum for all gear types, the number of vessel-days fished using the template provided in Annex 1.

Note: WCPFC10 clarified that this reporting responsibility lies with the flag State

No report available – Kiribati did not flag or charter vessels targeting North Pacific Albacore north of the equator nor were there any accidental by-catches by Kiribati's flag vessels in 2025. Therefore, CMM2019-03 [North Pacific Albacore], Para 3 is not applicable to Kiribati.

AUDIT POINT [RP] The Secretariat confirms that CCM submitted a report of information on catch and effort by CCM flagged vessels engaged in directed fishing for NP albacore north of the equator, by gear type and days fished (effort) and by weight (catch), using the template at Annex 1 of CMM 2019-03.

CMM 2023-03 [North Pacific Swordfish], Para 4

All CCMs shall report annually to the WCPFC Commission all catches of North Pacific swordfish in the Area and all fishing effort in those fisheries as well as catch and effort across the North Pacific subject to the measures in paragraph 2, by gear type using the template provided in Annex 1.

**Note: CMM 2023-03:*

Paragraph 2: The Members, Cooperating Non-Members and participating territories (hereinafter referred to as CCMs) shall take necessary measures to ensure that the level of fishing effort of their fisheries taking more than 200 metric tons per year of North Pacific swordfish in the Area is not increased beyond 2008-2010 average annual levels.

Paragraph 3 clarifies that paragraphs 2 and 4 shall not be applied to those fisheries taking less than 200 metric tons of North Pacific swordfish in the Area per year. However, if the catches of such fisheries exceed 200 metric tons in any given year, the Commission shall adopt appropriate management measures for such fisheries.

No report available – Kiribati’s vessel did not fish in the North Pacific area, therefore, the CMM2023-03 [North Pacific Swordfish], para 4 is not applicable to Kiribati.