



Pacific Tuna Tagging Project

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WCPFC SC22 2026

Summary

Full project report in **SC22-RP-PTTP-01**
Steering Committee Report **RP-PTTP-02**

1. Field Operations

- a) 2025-26 Activities
- b) 2026-27 Work-plan

2. Recovery Network and Data

- a) 2025-26 Activities
- b) 2026-27 Work-plan

3. Analysis

- a) 2025-26 Activities
- b) 2026-27 Work-plan

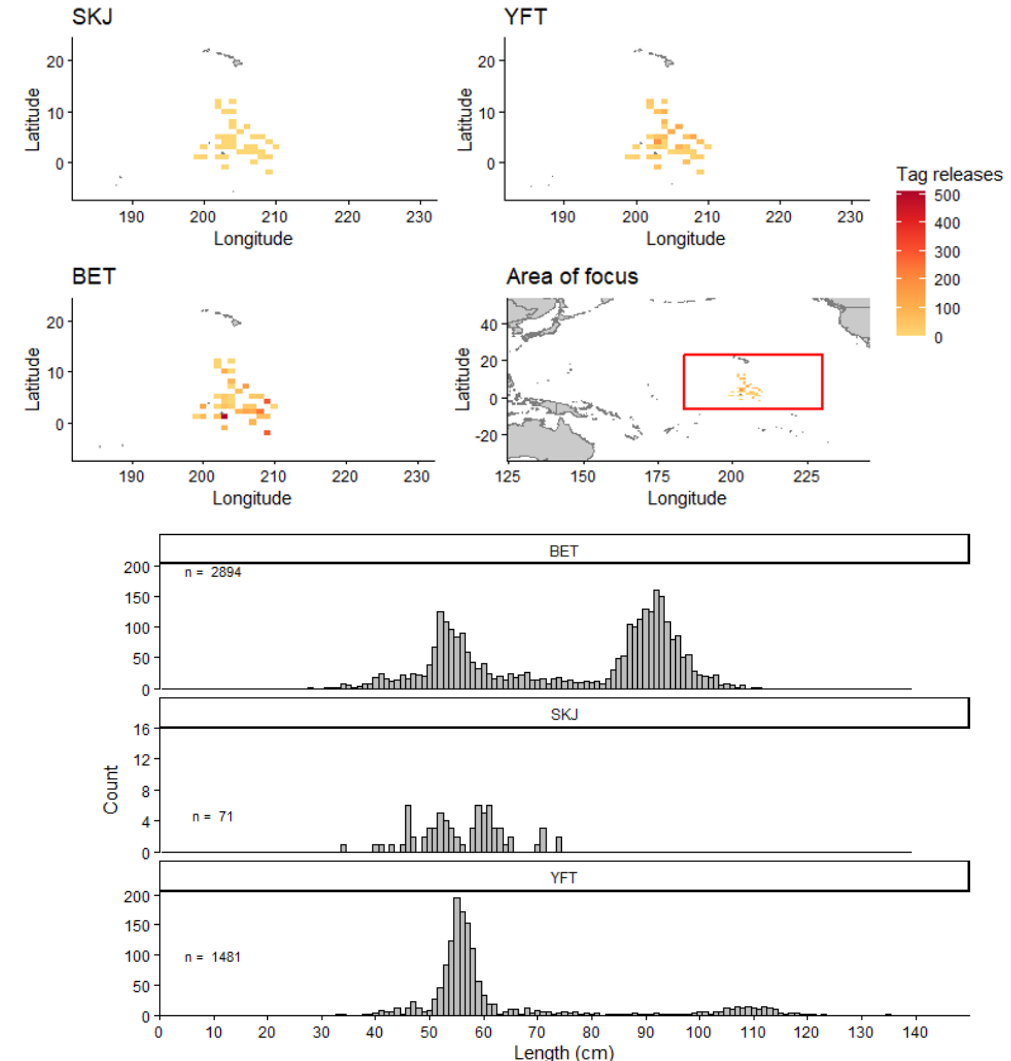
4. Budgeting and Administration

5. Recommendations



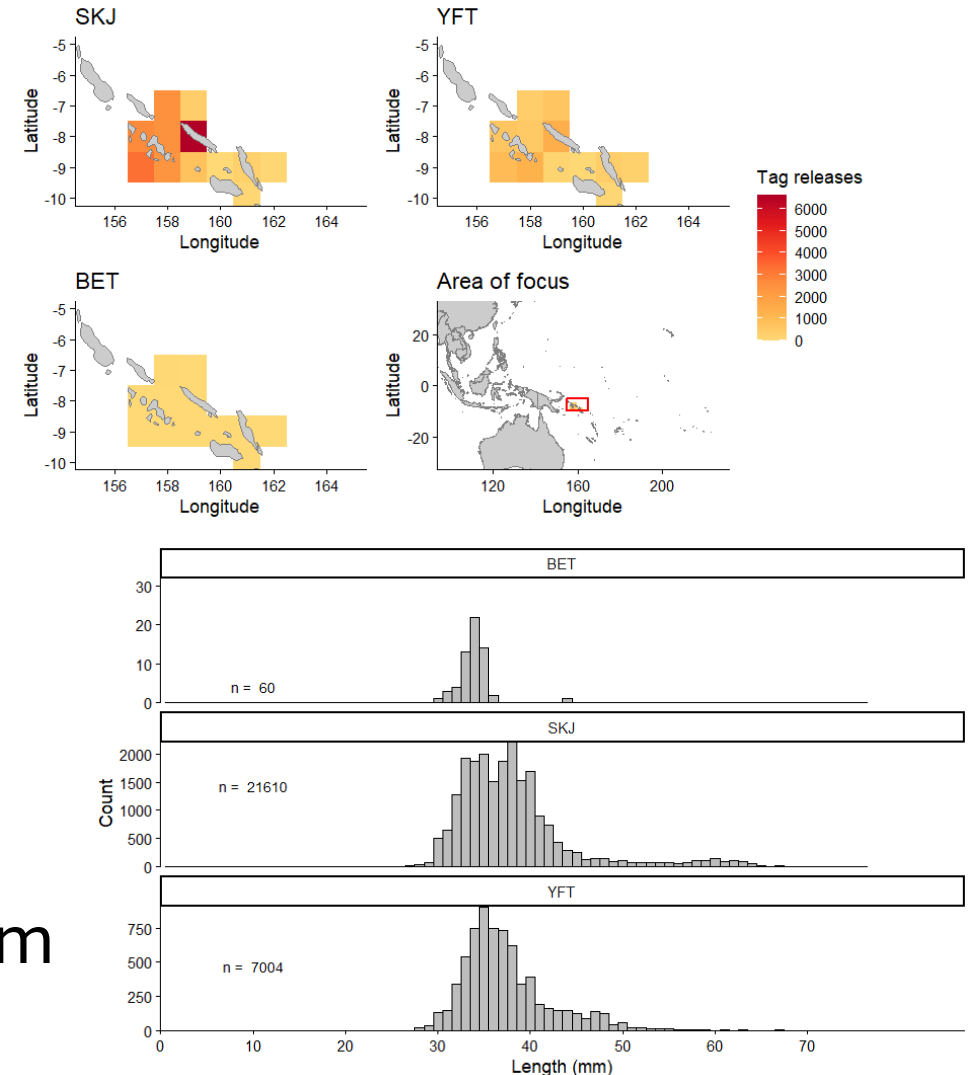
2.1 Field Operations: 2025-26 Activities

- June-Aug 2025 Central Pacific 17 Cruise
- 4,459 tuna tagged during 45-days
 - 65% Bigeye
 - 33% Yellowfin
 - 2% Skipjack
- Majority on industry-shared dFADs in equatorial zone 0-10N
- Mode bigeye tuna length was 92cm FL
- Biological samples collected to support ageing, reproductive biology, heavy metal pollutants and genomics



2.1 Field Operations: 2025-26 Activities

- Feb-July 2026 Western Pacific 7 Series
- 28,674 tuna tagged during 35 days
 - 75% skipjack
 - 24% yellowfin
 - <1% bigeye
- Solomon Islands-based
- Establish renovated vessel capacity and new baitgrounds for future tagging
- Biological sampling supporting ageing, genomics and epigenetic ageing, ecosystem indicators

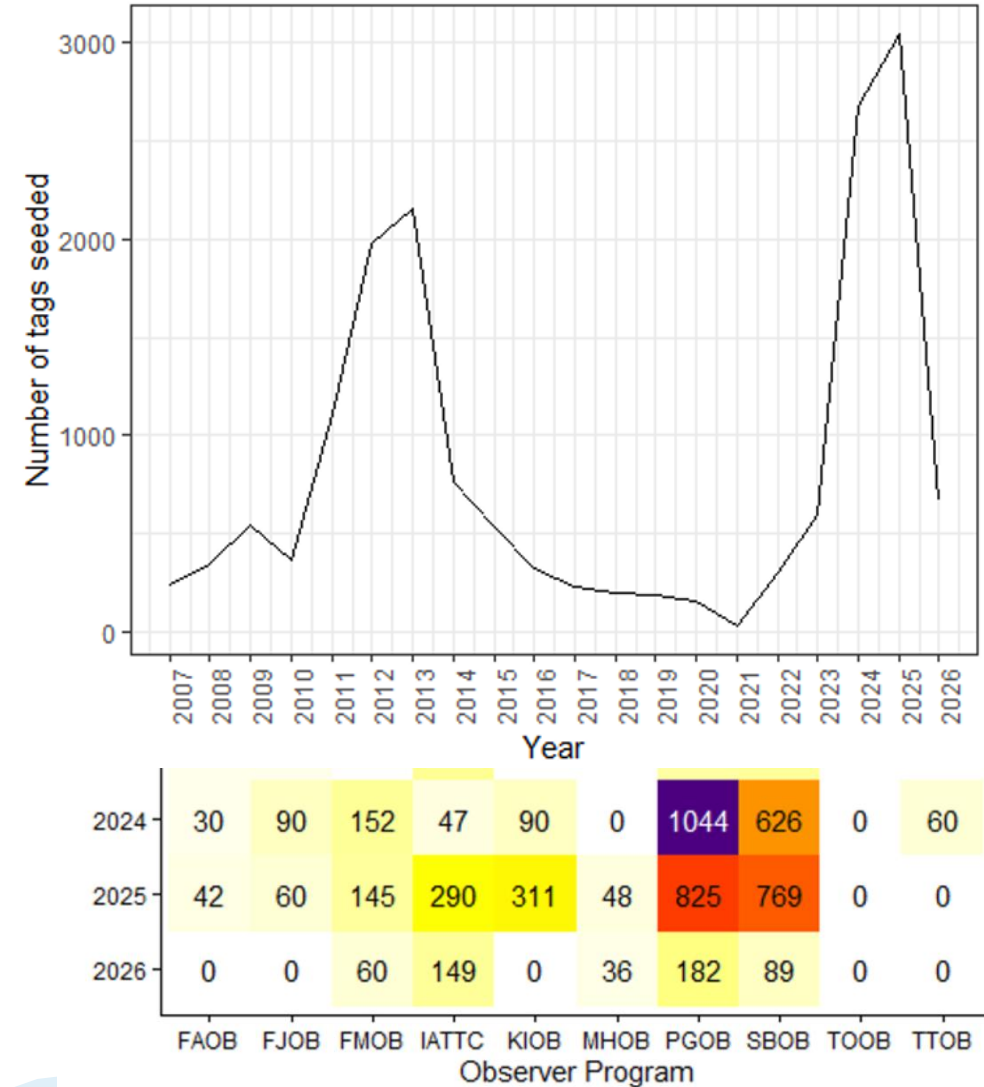


2.2 Field Operations: 2026-27 Workplan

Year	Activities	Scientific Outputs
2026	Seasonal Pole & Line Tagging Cruises (~60 days in total) - Solomon Islands EEZ focused - primary focus SKJ - secondary YFT Test the performance and reliability of the refurbished FV Solomon Searcher for wider application in western Pacific Identify and establish new bait grounds for wider western Pacific skipjack tagging	Tagging data for WCPO tuna stock assessments and harvest strategy development (scientific services) Tagging data for SEAPODYM, improving movement estimation for stock assessment, harvest strategies and climate projections (scientific services, P62) External estimates of natural and fishing mortality, and abundance (scientific services, P123)
	Biological sampling of tuna and bycatch	Age-at-length parameters for WCPFC stock assessments (Science Services, P129) Independent estimates of movement (Science Services) Connectivity and stock structure (Science Services) Climate impacts on growth (P121) Ecosystem indicators (P121), climate impacts on tuna ecology and ecosystems (P62, P121)
	High-quality genetic sampling of tuna	Building of epigenetic clocks, genome deep sequencing, close-kin mark-recapture estimates (P100d, P123)
2027	Seasonal Pole & Line Tagging Cruises (~60 days in total) - Warm-pool focused (Solomon Is., Fed. States of Micronesia EEZ, eastern warm-pool) - primary focus SKJ - secondary YFT	Scientific Services, P62
	Archival tagging of yellowfin tuna	Independent estimates of movement Spatial variability in growth and bioenergetics
	Biological sampling of tuna and bycatch	Scientific Services, P62, P120, P121, P129
	High-quality genetic sampling of tuna	P100d, P123
	RFID Automated tag detection field trials	Improve reporting and reporting rate priors (Scientific Services)

3.1 Recovery Network and Data: 2025-26 Activities

- Targeted trips to key locations to maintain network
 - Thailand canneries, Pago Pago, Noro, and PNG ports
- Training of observers, coordinators, briefers and debriefers in tagging activities
- Validation of 4000+ tag recaptures in preparation for 2026 stock assessments
- Continued, increased levels of tag seeding
- Regional capacity currently ~100 kits/year, exceeding 34 minimum identified



3.3 Recovery Network and Data: Workplan 2026-27

Year	Activities	Scientific Outputs
2026	Training of tag recovery officers and new data entry staff	Acquisition of high-quality tagging data (Scientific Services)
	Maintenance and expansion of tag recovery network Thailand	Continued and improved tag reporting (Scientific Services)
	Tag seeding	Well characterised reporting rates (Scientific Services) Mapping of product flow to inform tag recovery network and P114 Improving Cannery Receipt Data
	Data validation for 2026 YFT and BET stock assessments	Maximal data available for stock assessments (Scientific Services)
	Support tag recovery officers in IATTC ports	Maximal data available for stock assessments (Scientific Services)
2027	Maintenance and expansion of tag recovery in warm-pool region	Acquisition of high-quality tagging data (Scientific Services)
	Tag Seeding	
	Evaluation of RFID detection rate	Well characterised reporting rates (Scientific Services)
	Data validation for 2028 SKJ stock assessment	Maximal data available for stock assessments (Scientific Services)
	Continued training of tag recovery officers for data entry	
	Support tag recovery officers in IATTC ports	Maximal data available for stock assessments (Scientific Services)

4.1 Data Analysis: 2025-26 Activities

- PTPP Tagging data inputs to 2026 yellowfin and bigeye tuna assessments:
 - Guide decisions on region structures and external parameter estimation (SC22-2026-SA-IP01)
 - Preparation for direct integration into stock assessments (SA-WP03, SA-WP04)
 - Estimation of tag reporting rates, tagging-induced mortality, and tag mixing rates (SA-IP05, SA-IP04, SA-IP19)
- Updated tagging data files for estimation and validation of movement parameters in new SEAPODYM reference models for yellowfin and bigeye tuna (EB-WP01)
- Independent estimation of bigeye tuna natural mortality (SA-IP14)
- Datasets used in operating and estimation models, as well as monitoring, for harvest strategy work

4.2 Data Analysis: Workplan 2026-27

Year	Activities	Scientific Outputs
2026	Data preparation for 2026 YFT and BET stock assessments	High quality stock assessments (Scientific Services)
	Estimation of reporting rates, tagging condition effects, and tag mixing rates for 2026 YFT and BET stock assessments	High quality stock assessments (Scientific Services)
	Data preparation for estimation and validation of SEAPODYM YFT and BET reference model movement parameters	Improved SEAPODYM reference models for climate projection (P62)
	Independent estimation of BET natural mortality	Independent demographic parameter estimation (Scientific Services)
2027	Validation of independent natural mortality estimation through simulation testing	
	Data preparation and analysis for development of independent, spatiotemporal model for estimation of fishing mortality and abundance	Independent estimation of fishing mortality and abundance (P123)
	Analysis for potential of RFID tagging technology scale-up	Improved and well characterised reporting rates (Scientific Services)

Administration and Budgeting

- Steering Committee held 2nd July 2026 (RP-PTTP-02)
- Updated Terms of Reference proposed in SA-WP-04
- PTTP Advisory Planning Committee scheduled for Feb 2027
- PTTP Steering Committee to be held back-to-back with PMSB Steering Committee in ~July 2027
- 2027 Indicative WCPFC budget remains the same @ USD 950,000

Year	2025	2026	2027
WCPFC Contribution	875,000	950,000	950,000
Republic of Korea	160,000	160,000	160,000
SSP Contribution	1,200,000	1,000,000	1,400,000
Total	2,235,000	2,110,000	2,510,000

Invite SC22 to consider the following recommendations:



- Note the **need for member participation and support in tag reporting** as both wild and seeded tags continue to be found throughout the fishery;
- Note the **critical importance of effective tag seeding** for informing stock assessment, and support the increased deployment and fleet coverage of **tag seeding experiments through regional and national observer programmes**;
- Note the **revised Terms of Reference** endorsed by the PTTP Steering Committee (SA-WP-04);
- Consider and **endorse the PTTP work-plan** for 2026 - 2029.
 - *Field operations*: **maximise use of renovated pole & line vessel for prioritised skipjack tagging** to support stock assessment, harvest strategy work, and improved SEAPODYM climate projections. Leverage at-sea science platform to **support continued biosampling** of tuna and bycatch
 - *Recovery network and data*: Promote **increased levels of tag seeding**. Continue to invest in **maintaining and improving the tag recovery network**
 - *Analysis*: Continue to **incorporate tagging data into stock assessment and harvest strategy work, independent estimates** of mortality, abundance, and movement, and **SEAPODYM** for improved climate projections