



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE  
NINTH REGULAR SESSION**

6-14 August 2013  
Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia

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

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**WCPFC-SC9-AR/CCM-21**

**SOLOMON ISLANDS**



**PART 1: INFORMATION ON FISHERIES RESEARCH AND STATISTICS**

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**SOLOMON ISLANDS - 2013**



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE  
EIGHTH REGULAR SESSION**

6<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> August 2013

Ponapei, FSM

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**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMISSION**

**PART 1: INFORMATION ON FISHERIES RESEARCH AND STATISTICS**

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**Solomon Islands**

2013



**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE WESTERN AND CENTRAL PACIFIC  
FISHERIES COMMISSION**

**PART 1: INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH AND  
STATISTICS 2012**

**SOLOMON ISLANDS**

Edward Honiwala

Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources

Scientific data was provided to the Commission in accordance with the decision relating to the provision of scientific data to the Commission by the 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2013	<b>YES</b>
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## **ABSTRACT**

The Tuna fishery of Solomon Islands consists of the commercial (domestic and foreign fleets) sector and the artisanal and subsistence sector. The tuna fishery is very important to the people of Solomon Islands economically and socially. The commercial sector generates substantial income to the national economy and the government revenue through exports, access fees, duties and levies. The artisanal fishery contributes to the social wellbeing of Solomon Islanders.

In 2012 a total of 434 fishing vessels (including US Treaty and FSMA) were licensed to fish in Solomon Islands EEZ. This comprises of 214 purse seine, 200 longline, and 20 pole and line vessels. The number of vessels decline by 48 fishing vessels compared with 2011, which 482 were licensed. The decline was due to the reduction of the licenses allocations for the vessels operating under charter arrangement.

The provisional total catch for 2012 within Solomon Islands EEZ for all fleets is 92,603 mt. This comprises of 52,206 mt of skipjack, 26,708 mt of Yellowfin, 3,338 mt of bigeye and 10,230 mt of albacore tunas. The purse seine fishery dominated the catch with 77% followed by longline fishery with 21% and pole and line fishery with only 2%. The pole and line fishery only present the catch from the local fleet. This is a provisional catch as the 2012 catch is yet to be finalized.

Solomon Islands tuna fisheries are valuable natural resources and vitally important to the people of Solomon Islands economically and socially. In this regards, the Solomon Islands Government emphasis as one of its objectives to ensure maximum economic benefits derived from the tuna fisheries to the people of Solomon Islands, at the same time ensure the health of the tuna stocks are maintain at a sustainable level. The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) is tasked to implement and ensure these objectives were achieved.

The only way to achieve the above objective is by increasing the amount of fish landed and processed in Solomon Islands. The government is working on these by encouraging investors to invest in onshore processing plants. MFMR produced a Tuna Investment Strategy Document to give investors certainty and assurance to invest.



## **INTRODUCTION**

This report is to update and provide information on the status and developments of the tuna fishery of Solomon Islands in the last five years. The tuna fishery of Solomon Islands comprises of the commercial sector and the artisanal or small scale & subsistence sector. These two sectors are important to the people of Solomon Islands economically and socially. This report will focuses mainly on the commercial tuna sector.

The commercial tuna fishery comprises of the domestic (local) fleets, locally based foreign fleets and the foreign distant water fleets. The three main distinct fisheries are purse seining, longlining and pole & line, which have consistently operated within the Solomon Islands EEZ since 1978. These three fisheries are important and generate millions of dollars into the economy, through access fees, landings and processing, transshipment & export levies. In addition, the sector contributes significantly towards creating more job opportunities for the people of Solomon Islands through crewing and other onshore developments.

The domestic (local) fleet comprises of both the purse seine, and pole and line vessels, mainly operated by local companies. The National Fisheries Development Ltd operating the purse seine vessels since 1980s and more recently in 2011 registered 3 pole and line vessels. Solomon Taiyo Ltd, now known as Soltuna Ltd, once operated one of the largest pole and line fishery in the WCPO in the 1980s up to late 1990s. Historically, the company made very good catches between 17,000mt to 36,000mt annually between 1990-1999. The company processed most of their catches at the Noro plant in Western Province. The company ceased their pole and line operations after the ethnic tension in early 2000. Soltuna Ltd no longer operates pole and line fleets, but now concentrated on fish processing and canning. The company received their supply of fish from the National Fisheries Development Ltd (NFD) fishing vessels.

As more local vessels (mainly pole and line vessels) exit the fishery, more foreign vessels emerged and register to fish within the Solomon Islands EEZ. The numbers of vessels continue to increase significantly for both purse seine and longline fisheries.



The bilateral arrangements between Solomon Islands and certain distant water fishing nations (DWFNs) started in the 1990s. This is to allow vessels from these nations to fish in Solomon Islands EEZ. The number of vessels operating under bilateral arrangement continues to increase since late 1990s and remains constant in the last 5 years. Under this arrangement, all catch are taken out of Solomon Islands and landed in other countries of interest.

Some foreign vessels have access to fish in Solomon Islands EEZ through charter arrangements. The charter arrangements allow foreign boats to fish in Solomon Islands was first established in early 2000s. This is a sort of joint venture agreements between Solomon Islands companies and certain foreign boat owners. Under the arrangement, foreign boats are chartered by local companies to fish in Solomon Islands. It is a requirement under the Solomon Islands legislations and laws that all catches from these vessels must be landed in Solomon Islands.

The number of boats under this arrangement increased, especially in the long line fishery since late 2000s. The increase was due to quite a number of small longline boats from Taiwan, Fiji and China that joined the fleet.

The Solomon Islands Government, through the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) is tasked to properly manage the tuna fishery. Tuna is an important resource for Solomon Islands, therefore long term sustainability is paramount importance to ensure long term economic and social benefits to the people. The Government recent policy change, that is to maximize economic benefits to the people of Solomon Islands. This can only be achieved through landing of more fish in Solomon Islands for processing. As such the Government tries to introduce new policies to encourage investors. The government recognizes the factor that investors or companies must make profits on their investments.



## 1.0. Flag State Reporting

### 1.1.1. Domestic Fleet

The number of Solomon Islands flagged fishing vessels operated within the Solomon Islands EEZ fluctuated between 5 - 8 vessels per year in the last 5 years. This fleet is dominated by the purse seine fishery with the highest number of vessels followed by the pole and line fishery. There have been no Solomon Islands flagged longline vessels licensed to fish in that period. The number of purse seine vessels fluctuated between 4 and 7 vessels and the pole and line fleet 0-3 vessels.

The Solomon Islands flagged vessels only operate within the Solomon Islands EEZ. The vessels are much smaller with fish holding capacity ranges between 300mt – 500mt and concentrated their fishing activities more within the archipelagic waters. These vessels fish mainly at FADs and landed their catch at the Noro processing plant in Solomon Islands.

*Table 1: Solomon Islands flagged vessels by gear type licensed to fish in 2008 - 2012*

Gear type	Year				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Long line	0	0	0	0	0
Purse seine	4	7	5	5	5
Pole & Line	1	0	1	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>

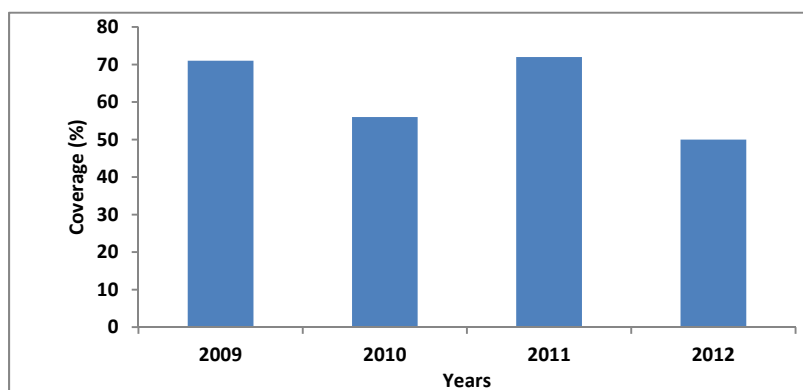
### 1.2.0. Data Coverage

The level of data coverage for the national fleet varies between fleets and companies. Generally, the logsheet (data) coverage is good among the Solomon Islands flagged vessels. The only problem or challenge is the late submissions from the company to MFMR. The logsheets are always available at the company office in Noro, Western Province. MFMR have to chase or request the logsheets before they submit them. The company should send in the logsheets on regular basis or after each trip would be helpful.



Vessels Monitoring System (VMS) data are currently used as a tool to determine the level of submission of logsheet coverage to the MFMR. This is quite useful for MFMR especially it assists in other management and compliance related work as well.

The data coverage for the local vessels ranges from 50% to 72% in the last 4 years. We presumed the reason for this low coverage rates due to the technical problems currently experienced with the TUFMAN database. SPC had been contacted to rectify the problem and arrangement had been made for their IT staff to assist.



*Fig 1: Logsheet data coverage by percentage (%) against VMS data for the domestic (local) purse seine vessels for 2009-2012*

### 1.3.0 Catch Estimates

#### 1.3.1. Purse Seine

The annual catch estimates for the domestic fleet fluctuated between 14,000 mt to 28,000 mt per year for the last 5 years. The highest catch was recorded in 2011 with more than 27,000mt. The 2012 catch was more than 26,000 mt, which is the second highest in the last 5 years. *(Note: This record is obtained from the company and yet to be entered into the TUFMAN database).*

The catch composition for the purse seine fishery is dominated by skipjack tuna followed by yellowfin tuna. In 2012 as shown on the company logsheets records, skipjack made up 61% and yellowfin tuna 39%. The fishing effort increased from more than 500 days in 2010 to more than 900 days in 2011. The 2012 fishing effort is presumably higher than the previous years.





1.3.2. Pole and line

The Solomon Islands pole and line fishery had been one of the largest in the WCPO prior to 1999. The fishery was dominated by the domestic fleet, which recorded an average of more than 25,000 mt per year for 1980 - 1999. The pole and line catch started to decline since 2000. This is due to a number of vessels ceased operations as the company faced financial hardship due to the ethnic tension which hit the country since 1999-2001. The declining trend continued, and in 2006 about 6,988 mt was recorded. In 2008 more vessels were tied-up and only 1,340mt were recorded, the catch further declined in 2011 with only 870 mt were recorded.

The Solomon Taiyo Ltd (now Soltuna) finally decided to cease all pole and line operations in 2009 and 2010 respectively and concentrated on processing. The company entered into an agreement with National Fisheries Development Ltd (NFD) to purchase their catches and process in their Noro Plant.

NFD Ltd decided to revive the pole and line fishery, and register 3 vessels in 2011, which 869 mt were recorded. In 2012 a total of 2,135mt were recorded which comprised of 1,877mt of SKJ and 258mt of YFT.

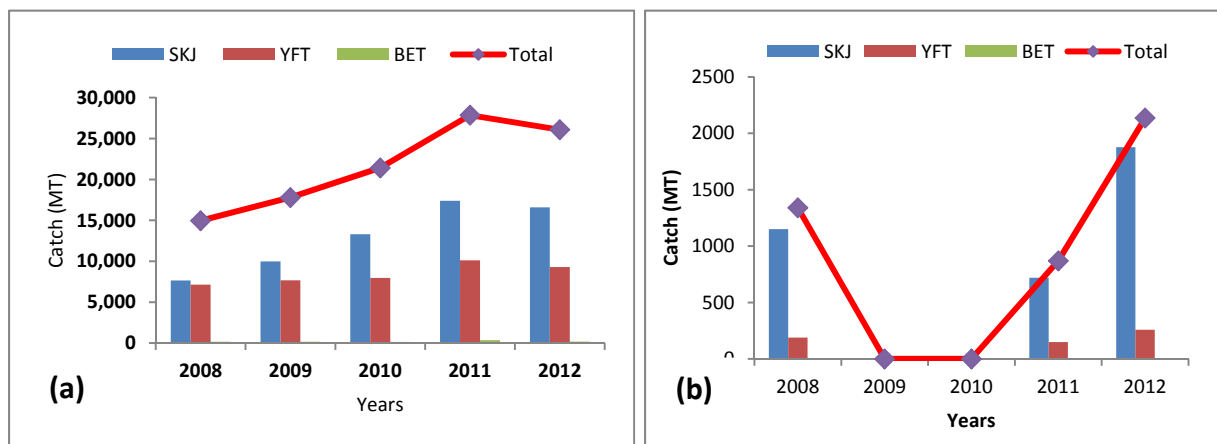


Fig 2. Total annual catch by Solomon Islands flagged vessels (a) purse seine fleet 2008 - 2012, and (b) Pole and line fleet 2008 - 2012



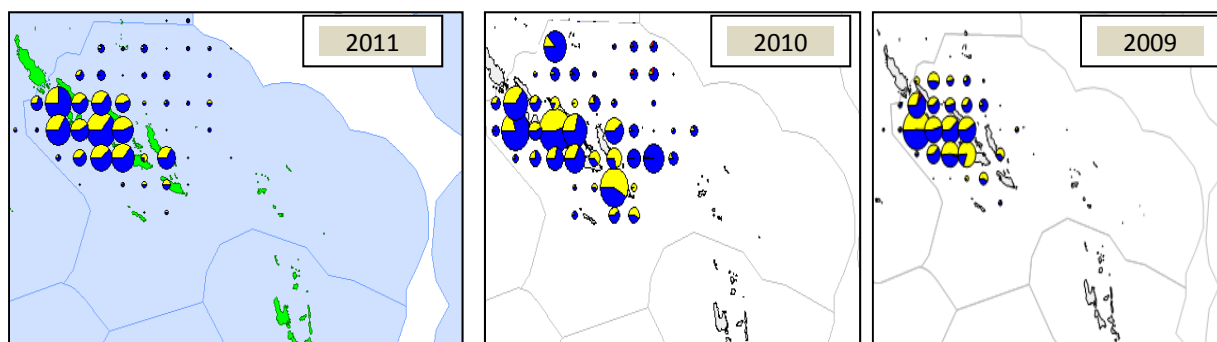
### 1.3.3. Longline vessel

There have been no Solomon Islands flagged longline vessels licensed to fish in Solomon Islands in the last 5 years.

### 1.4.0 Catch Distribution

The Solomon Islands flagged (purse seine) vessels have fished predominantly on anchored FADs and concentrated their efforts more within the main group archipelagic (MGA) waters.

The catch distribution was determined by extracting the catch and effort data from the catch logsheets received from the vessels. As indicated in Figure 3, fishing effort within the Main Group Archipelagic (MGA) waters is higher compared to the other parts of the EEZ. As shown below the fishing pattern is very similar for the period 2009 – 2011. The 2012 effort distribution is not shown in this report due to the technical problem experience with TUFMAN database.



*Fig 3: Annual catch and effort distributions for the Solomon Islands Domestic Purse Seine fleet for 2009-2011*

## 2.0 Coastal State Reporting

### 2.1.0 Foreign Fleet

Many foreign fishing vessels have fishing access to the Solomon Islands EEZ, either through bilateral, multilateral or charter arrangements. These arrangements have different license terms and conditions which mainly define the area of access. The vessels under the bilateral arrangements registered in the three main commercial tuna fisheries, purse seine, longline and pole and line. Those under the multilateral arrangements (US Treaty) and similarly the FSMA



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vessels only participate in the purse seine fishery. The charter arrangements participated in both the longline and purse seine fisheries.

The countries which have bilateral agreements with Solomon Islands include Japan, Korea, Taiwan, New Zealand and European Union (Spanish vessels). The number of vessels under the bilateral arrangements continues to increase since late 1990s. Most vessels from these fleets are from Korea, Taiwan and Japan. The number of vessels fluctuated in late 2000s between 240 to 300 vessels. In 2012 a total of more than 280 vessels register under both the bilateral and the multilateral and FSM arrangements.

Under the multilateral arrangement, US purse seine vessels allowed to fish in EEZ of FFA member countries. This arrangement (US Treaty) is administered by the FFA on-behalf of member countries. US boats started their operations in Solomon Islands EEZ since early 1990s. Their effort in Solomon Islands waters continue to increase ever since.

The number of vessels operating in Solomon Islands EEZ under charter arrangements continues to increase since 2000s. The number fluctuated between 150 – 200 vessels from 2008 to 2012. The highest number of vessels was recorded in 2009 with 186 vessels. In 2011, the Solomon Islands Government take the initiative to reduce the number of vessels under this arrangement, which resulted in 155 vessels registered in 2012. Most vessels under this fleet are mainly from Taiwan, China and Fiji and are licensed and targeting albacore tuna.

*Table 2: Number of Foreign fishing vessels (under bilateral & multilateral arrangements) by year, flag, and gear type registered to fish in Solomon islands EEZ for 2007 - 2011*

Flag	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Japan	25 LL 12 PL 34PS	24 LL 10 PL 34 PS	28 LL 13 PL 35PS	36 LL 22 PL 35 PS	23 LL 17 PL 36 PS
Korea	38 LL 30 PS	12 LL 26 PS	13 LL 28 PS	17 LL 28 PS	8 LL 27 PS
New Zealand	4PS	3 PS	4 PS	1 PS	4 PS
Taiwan	37 LL 34 PS	49 LL 33 PS	89 LL 35 PS	53 LL 35 PS	21 LL 30 PS
Spain	1 LL 4 PS	1 LL 3 PS	4 PS	4 PS	4 PS
US Treaty		39 PS	39 PS	39	39 PS



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FSMA	27 PS	30 PS	>30 PS	39	60 PS
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*Table 2a: Number of Foreign Fishing vessels operated in Solomon Islands under charter arrangements.*

Gear	Years				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Longline	163	174	170	157	146
Purse seine	7	12	7	9	9
Total	170	186	177	166	155

## 2.2.0 Data Coverage

### 2.2.1. Bilateral Vessels

The data coverage for foreign vessels varies between fleets and flag. There have been some significant improvements in data collections among the foreign fleets in recent years. The different data collected under this fleet includes catch logsheets, observers' data, license data, unloading, port sampling, VMS data transshipment data, weekly and zone reports.

The logsheet coverage is much higher in purse seine vessels compared to the longline and pole and line fleets. The Korean, Taiwanese and Japanese logsheets coverage in the purse seine fishery seems to be similar and fairly stable from 2009 to 2011. The 2012 coverage is quite low as more logsheets are yet to be entered into the TUFMAN database. The rest of the logsheets should be entered as soon as technical problem with TUFMAN database is fixed.

Korea and Japan are the two main bilateral partners to Solomon Islands in the longline fishery. In 2009 Korea recorded about 90% coverage of logsheets against the VMS data whilst Japan 80%. In 2011, the Korean coverage drops to 65% coverage and Japan with 75% coverage. The 2012 data coverage rates were quite low, this could be due to the technical problem experienced with TUFMAN database.

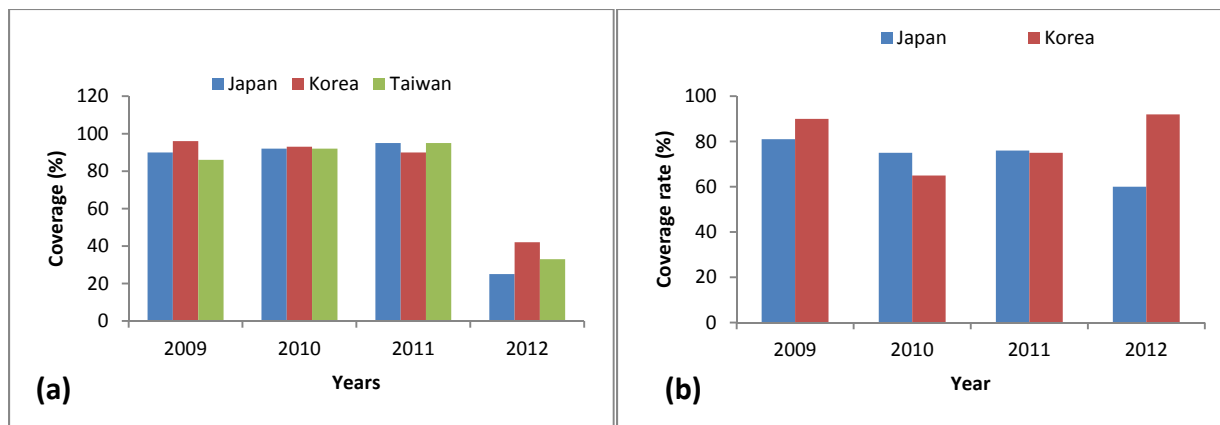


Fig 4: Percentage of logsheet coverage against VMS data for (a) purse seine and (b) longline vessels under bilateral arrangements for 2009 - 2012

### 2.2.2. Charter Vessels

The data coverage for the longline vessels under the charter arrangements is quite low compared to those under the bilateral arrangements. Most vessels under this fleet control by their mother companies based in their countries. This could be one reason for their low logsheet coverage, as their companies are not based in Solomon Islands.

The 2009 logsheets coverage is quite good for this fleet, with Chinese vessels' coverage rate reached up to 81%, Fiji 74% and Taiwan with 68% respectively. The 2011 coverage is quite low ranging between 19% to 41% for the 3 fleets. The 2012 logsheet submission is incomplete though Fig 4a shown some logsheet coverage extracted from TUFMAN database.

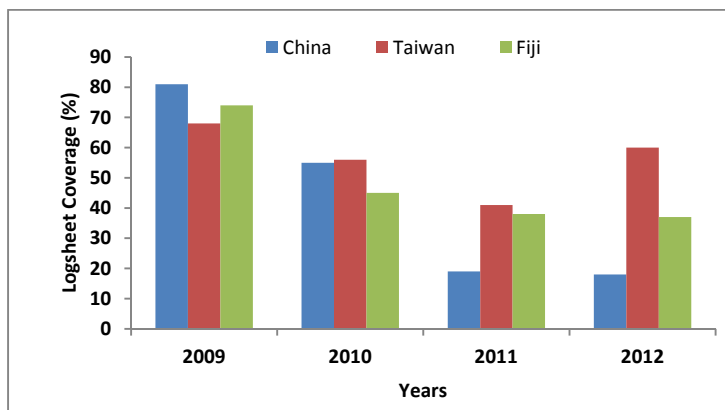


Fig 4a. Percentage of Logsheet coverage against VMS data for longline vessels under charter arrangements for 200-2012



### 2.3. Annual catch in Solomon Islands EEZ

#### 2.3.1. Purse seine

The foreign fleets have taken more than 80% of the total catch in Solomon Islands waters annually. The catch distribution by fleets and gear type (Fig 5), shown that the Korean purse seine fleet taken the high proportion of the catch compared to other fleets in the last 5 years. Their highest catch was recorded in 2008 and 2010 with more than 51,000mt. The US fleet recorded their highest catch in 2010 with more than 25,000mt. The PNG fleet recorded their highest catch in 2010 with more than 22,000mt.

The 2011 total catch for the purse seine under this fleet was more than 125,000mt, with more than 113,000mt of skipjack tuna followed by yellowfin with more than 22,411mt and more than 4,000mt. The 2012 catch estimates is quite low compared to 2011 and other previous years. This is due to the technical problem currently experience with TUFMAN database.

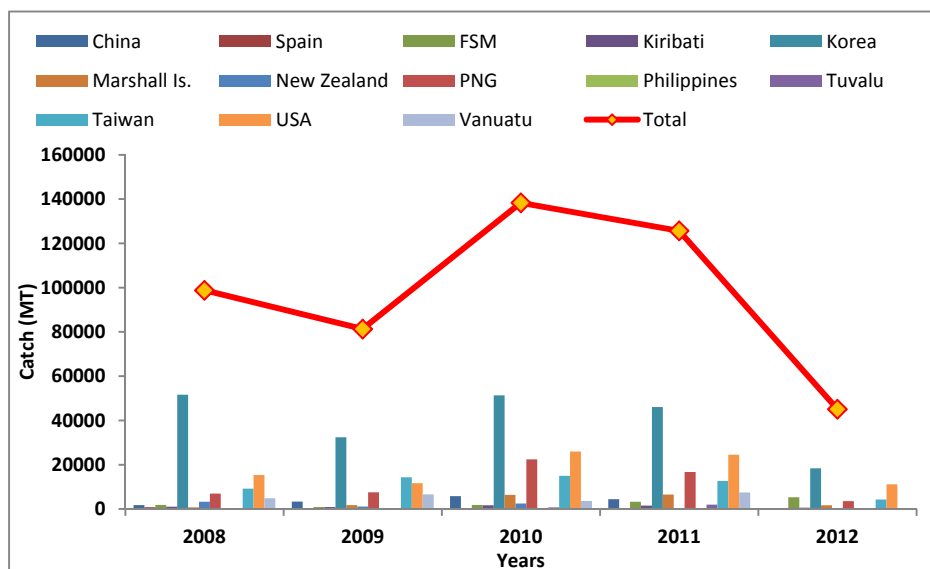


Fig 5. Annual catch estimates for the all foreign fleets (Purse seine)by flag for 2008-2012



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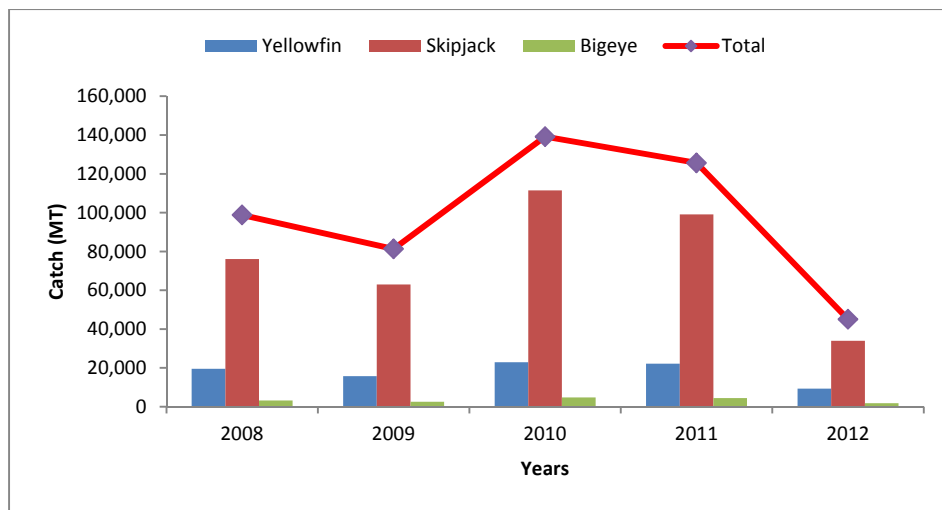
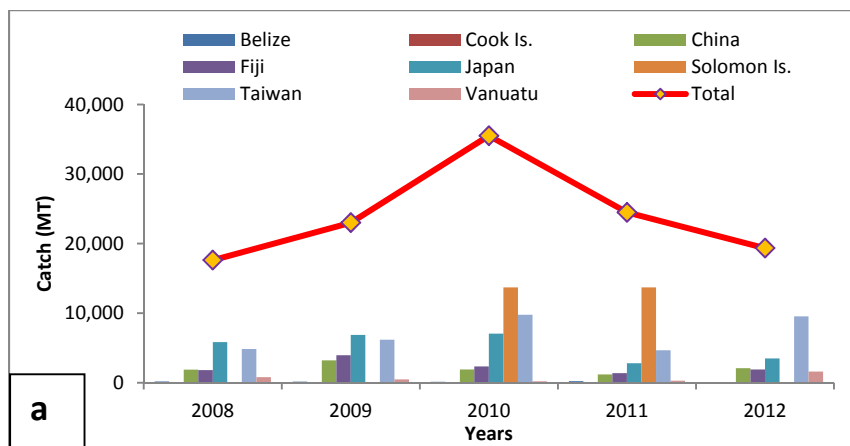


Fig 5a. Annual catch estimates for the all foreign fleets (Purse seine) by species for 2008-2012

The catch composition for the foreign fleet in purse seine fleet is dominated by skipjack tuna followed by Yellowfin and bigeye tuna in the last 5 years. As shown (figure 5a), the catch the highest catch was recorded in 2010 with more than 139,000mt, which comprises of more than 111,000mt of skipjack, 22,000mt of yellowfin and more than 4,000mt of bigeye tuna. The 2012 data was incomplete, therefore only a total of more than 45,000mt were recorded.

2.3.2. Longline

The annual catch estimates for the longline fishery in Solomon Islands EEZ ranges between 17,000mt – 36,000mt in the last 5 years. The highest cath was recorded in 2010 with more than 35,000mt.





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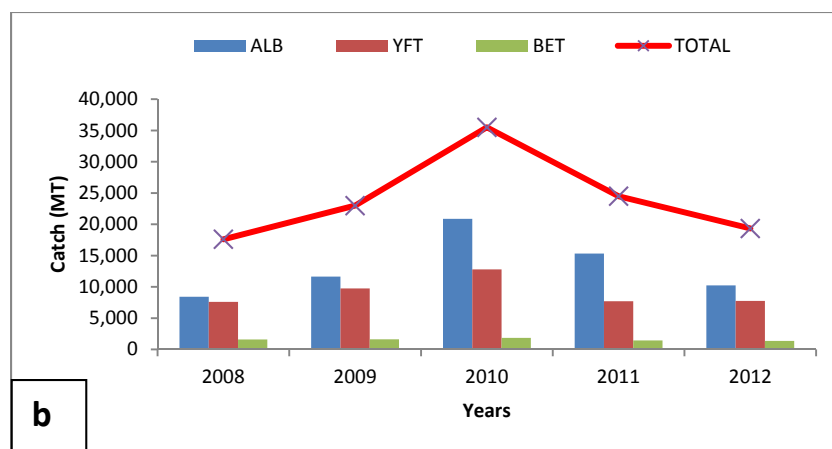


Fig 6. Annual catch estimates for the foreign fleets (longline) by (a) fleet and (b) species for 2008-2012

There had been a swift in the catch composition for the longline fishery since 2004. Historically the longline catch was dominated by yellowfin tuna followed by bigeye tuna. The catch composition in recent had shown a swift which albacore tuna now the dominant catch in the longline fishery, recording the highest catch of more than 20,000mt in 2010

2.3.3. Pole and Line

As shown in Table 4, the catch by the Japanese distant water pole and line fleet increased from 365 mt in 2009 to 1,145 mt in 2010. The 2012 catch is yet to be finalized.

Tabl 3. Annual Catch estimates for the Japanese foreign Pole and line fleet operating in Solomon Islands waters

JAPANESE POLE AND LINE FLEET				
YEAR	CATCH			
	SKIPJACK	YELLOWFIN	BIGEYE	TOTAL
2006	72	0	0	72
2007	35	0	0	35
2008	590.7	3.5	0	594.2
2009	363	2	0	365
2010	1145	0	0	1145
2011	451	5	0	456



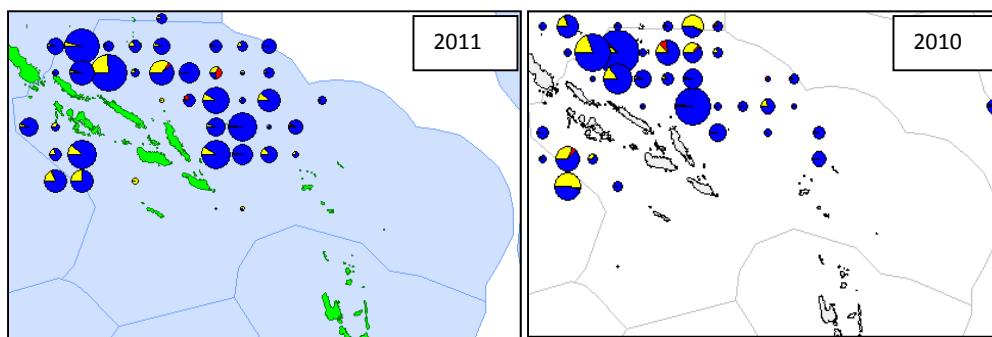


## 2.4. Catch and effort Distribution

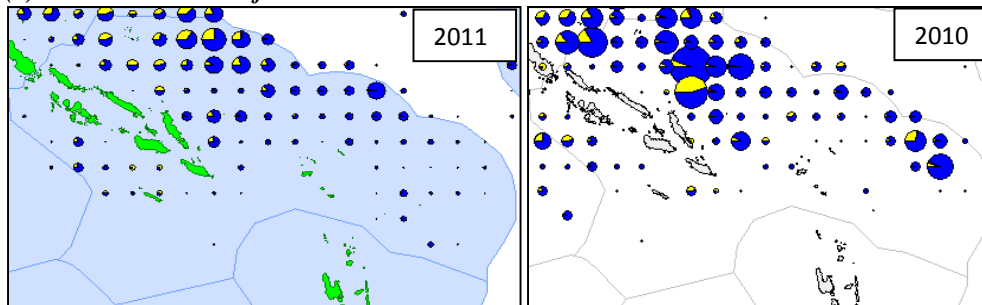
### 2.4.1. Purse seine

Foreign fishing vessels in the purse seine fishery fished outside of the archipelagic waters and outside of the 30 nautical miles from the baseline line. Generally most fishing occurred up north of the EEZ spreading towards the east.

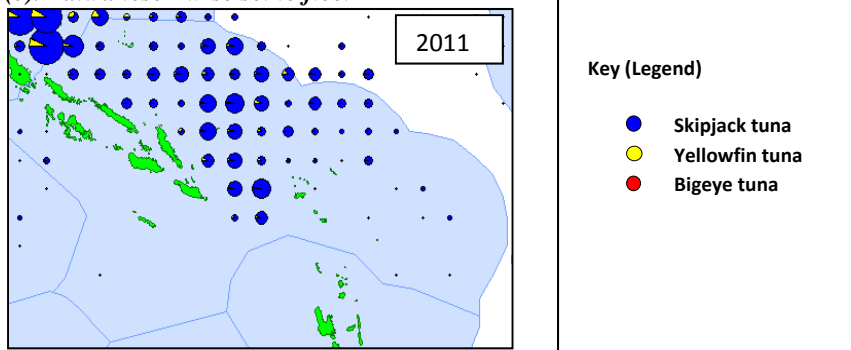
(a) *Japanese Purse seine fleet*



(b) *Korea Purse seine fleet*



(c) *Taiwanese Purse seine fleet*





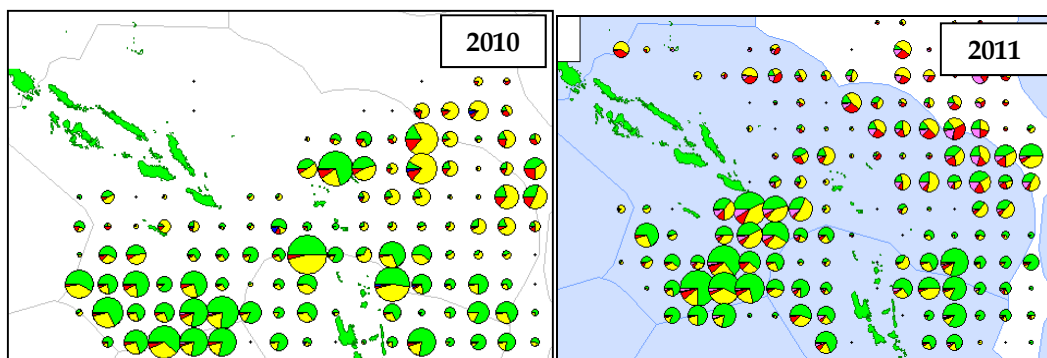
*Fig 7. Annual catch and effort distributions for the Foreign Purse seine Fleet licensed to fish in Solomon Islands EEZ under bilateral arrangements.*

As shown in Fig 6, the Japanese fleet concentrated their effort up north of the EEZ spreading towards the east and west of the EEZ. The Korean fleet seems to be concentrated their effort up north spreading further east and down to the middle of the EEZ. The Taiwanese in 2011 scattered up north to the EEZ towards the east and down towards the center of the EEZ. The fishing effort for the 2012 is not available at this stage due to the current technical problem experience with the TUFMAN database.

#### **2.4.2. Longline**

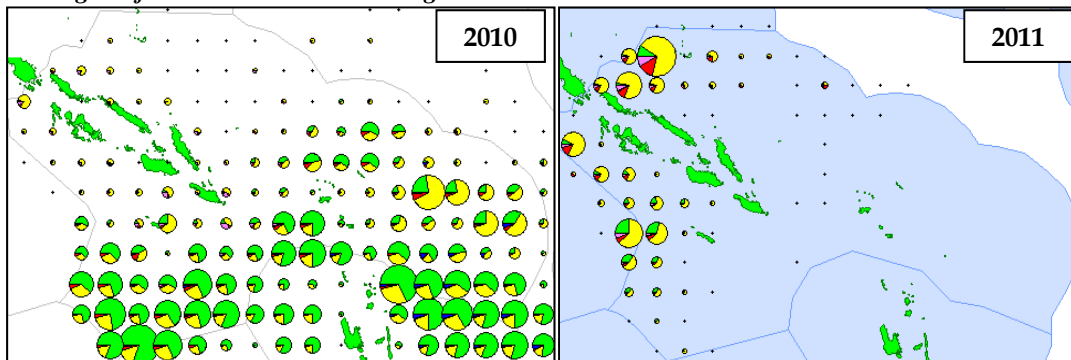
The longline vessels operating under bilateral arrangements fished outside of the 30NM from the baselines, and excluded from the archipelagic and territorial waters. Generally the level of longline fishing effort is higher in the southern part of the EEZ. The Taiwanese fleet (Figure 7(a)) concentrated more in the south towards the east of the EEZ. Similar fishing pattern was shown by the Japanese fleet (Figure 7(b)) in 2010. However, based on the limited data received and entered to date, in 2011 the Japanese fleet fished mostly in the western part of the EEZ. The 2012 data is not yet finalized so could not available to generate the distribution for that year.

*(a) Taiwan Longline fleet under bilateral arrangement*

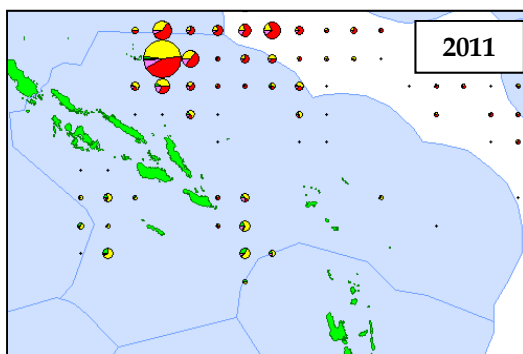




(b) Japan Longline fleet under bilateral arrangement



(c) Korean Longline fleet under bilateral arrangement



Key for the species



Fig. 7. Catch and effort distribution for bilateral vessels (Taiwan & Japan) and chartered foreign vessels (Fiji & China) in SI EEZ for 2010 (Note: catch distribution for chartered vessels for 2011 is under national fleet)

### 3. Data Collection

The MFMR is responsible for the management of the tuna fishery of Solomon Islands. The fishery is managed by in-put and out-put controls. There are additional monitoring mechanisms in place such as the observer programme, data collections, weekly reports, zone reports and VMS etc. The controls and monitoring mechanisms in place are requirements under the legislation and laws of Solomon Islands.

Solomon Islands work in collaboration with other agencies and regional countries in data collection issues. For instance, catch logsheet and observers' data are provided to SPC for analysis and to assist in stock assessments. Tuna data are also provided to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission on annual basis.



### **3.1 Observers Coverage**

The Solomon Islands observer programme was first established in the late 1980s. The programme initially started with placements only on the local fleet and later extended to the US treaty vessels. The programme started with only 3 full time fisheries observers. However, due to demand for observers on purse seine vessels, 4 additional observers were recruited in 1990. The programme was later reviewed in the late 90s, which one of the recommendations was to recruit more observers but on a contract basis. More observers were then recruited in the mid and late 2000s. In 2012 more than 80 observers were signed up with the MFMR under the national observer programme.

In 2012 a total of 174 observers' trips (excluding trips covered for US Treaty vessels) were made on both domestic and foreign vessels. About 86.7% of the total trips were made on purse seine vessels, 12.7% on longline, and 0.6% on pole and line vessels. The majority of the observers coverage was on foreign vessels with 139 trips and the coverage for the local vessel was 35 trips.

One of the major achievement for the Solomon Islands national observer programme in 2012 is the increased in longline observer coverage, which is much higher compared with the previous years.

### ***5.0. Port Sampling***

The port sampling programme had been suspended since 2008. The programme started recently in Honiara port late 2012. The programme started to pick-up in early this year (2013) and should be fully implemented towards end of this year.

### ***6.0. Transshipments Data***

Honiara port is one of the hotspots for transshipment activities for the foreign fleets. According to the records, the majority of the vessel used Honiara port for transshipment is Korea followed by the Taiwanese flagged vessels. Few US vessels and Japanese purse seine vessels comes in as well.



The number of vessels comes in for transshipment in Honiara port ranges from 160 – 250 vessels per year in the last recent years. The amount of tuna transshipped in Honiara port in the recent years fluctuated between 121,000 mt to 185,000 mt per year.

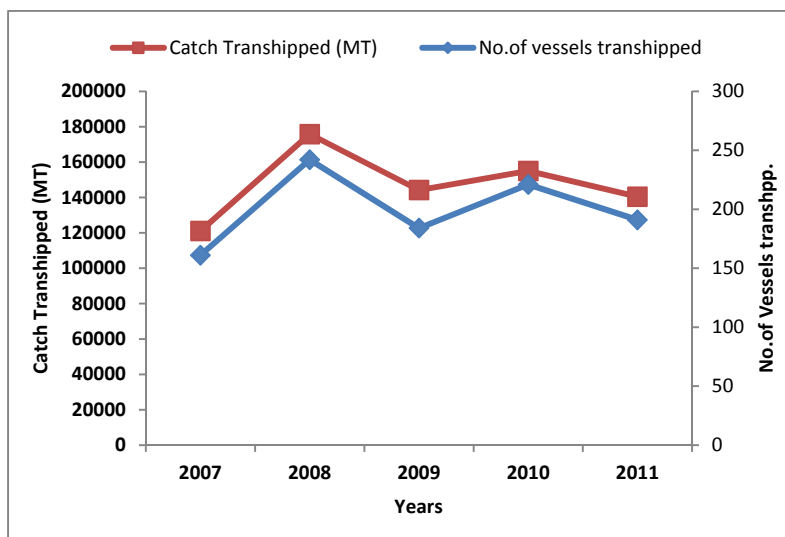


Fig 8: Total catch against vessels transhipped by year in Honiara an Noro Ports for 2007 - 2011.

### 7. By-Catch and Incidental catch data

The catch of non-target species or species of special interests is a common problem with the tuna fishery. It is quite difficult to get the actual records or data for the by-catch or incidental catch as fishing vessels would not willing to voluntary record them.

The only source to obtain data for by-catch of non-target species or species of special interest is the observer’s reports. However, the observer’s coverage on longline vessels is not 100% which will always be a challenge. The observer coverage on purse seine vessels is 100%, and yet it depends entirely on the commitment and reliability of the observer onboard. The data presented below is extracted from the observer reports in Solomon Islands EEZ.

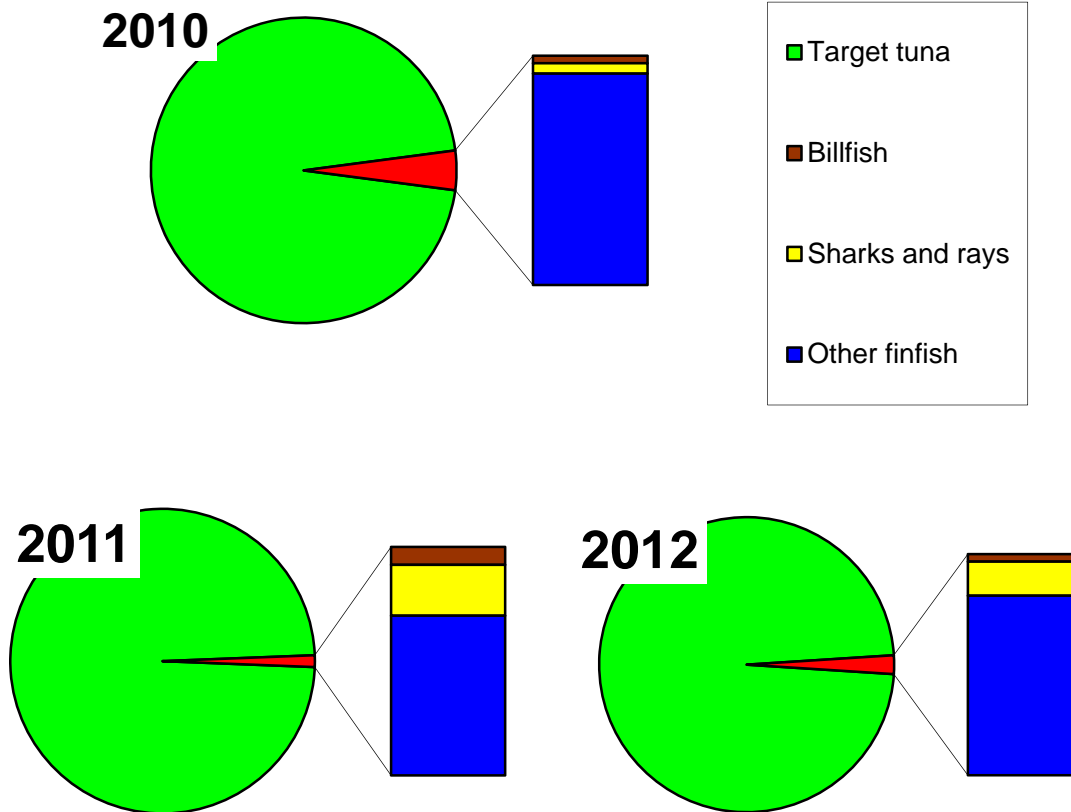


Fig 9. Species composition summary (%) for the Purse seine fishery based on the observers data 2010 - 2012

The total by-catch recorded in the last 3 years is quite low, which the highest was recorded in 2010 with about 4.1%, the 2011 recorded 1.23%. The 2012 species catch composition data (Fig 9) shown that the main tuna species made up about 97.9% of the catch and the by-catch species total up to about 2.1%. The by-catch composition has shown that the billfish made up 0.07%, shark and rays 0.31% and other fin fish 1.6%.



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Table 4. Species of special interest catch composition for the purse seine fishery from the observers' data for 2010-2012

Category	Species	2010		2011		2012	
		No.	Dead	No.	Dead	No.	Dead
Marine Turtles	Green Turtle	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Loggerhead Turtle	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Hawksbill turtle	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Leatherback turtle	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Olive Ridley Turtle	0	0	1	0	1	0
	Turtles (unidentified)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Marine Mammals	Dolphins and Porpoises	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Toothed Whales	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Non-toothed Whales	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Marine Mammals (unident.)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Whale Shark	Whale Shark	0	0	0	0	0	0
Birds	Birds	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Turtles</b>		0	0	1	0	1	0
<b>Total Marine Mammals</b>		0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 4 shown the interaction with gear by species of special interest is one in the last 3 years.

**7.0. Socio-economic Factors**

The Solomon Islands tuna fisheries are valuable natural resources and important to the people of Solomon Islands economically and socially. The Government in this regards changes it tuna investment policies to ensure maximum economic benefits derived from the tuna fisheries to the people of Solomon Islands. Again the policy set guidelines and rules to ensure that the health of all tuna stocks is maintain at a sustainable level. The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) is tasked to implement and ensure these objectives were achieved.

Tuna fisheries are important source of employment and export earnings for the people of Solomon Islands. It is a source of income for the government revenue through access fees and taxes and duties. The total employment in the fisheries sector is estimated to be around 3,000 and this would be increased in the next 2 or so years when the new processing plants are completed.



## PART 1: INFORMATION ON FISHERIES RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

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The total export, mainly from the tuna products for 2011 was over SBD222 million, which is 7% of the total export earnings for that year. The government revenue for access fees and VDS fees, which collected by MFMR for 2011 is about SBD110 million. The tuna fishery also brought in infrastructure developments and other social benefits to the rural communities. These include employment opportunities, housing, and health services etc.

In 2012, MFMR started implementing the Government tuna investment policy, by encouraging investors to invest in onshore processing. Three new plants were constructed last year, which one was opened and started exporting fresh bigeye tuna for sashimi markets in Japan. The Soltuna Company Ltd expanded the Noro plant to introduce a new shift to process albacore for loining and export to US markets. MFMR developed a new Tuna Investment Strategy document to encourage investors. The Government plans to develop the other 3 sites (Suafa Bay on Malaita, and Tenaru and Doma on Guadalcanal) for processing plants are still the priority projects.