



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
TENTH REGULAR SESSION**

Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands
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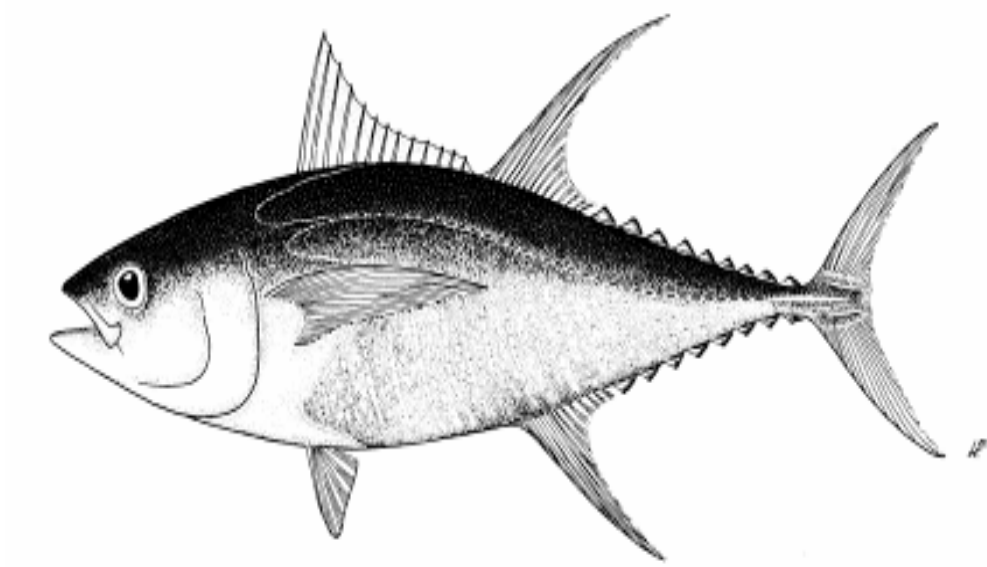
**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMISSION
PART 1: INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH, AND STATISTICS**

WCPFC-SC10-AR/CCM-17

NIUE

WCPFC-SC10

COUNTRY FISHERIES REPORT – NIUE



Fisheries Division

**Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries
Niue**

2014

1. Abstract

After an absence of fishing by offshore vessels in Niue's EEZ for over two years, Niue's longline fishery was re-established in June 2013 when the first license was approved. Niue licensed 7 foreign longline fishing vessels, 5 of which were flagged to Fiji, 1 to the Cook Islands and 1 to the United States of America. These 7 vessels continued the trend of albacore making up around 80% of the catch, followed by yellowfin, then bigeye tuna. Niue's offshore fishery is managed under its National Pelagic Management and Development Plan.

2. Background

Catch that had been caught in the past has Albacore at 80 per cent from the overall species caught, with yellowfin and others following.

At the peak of the Niue Fishing Factory processing plant, 2010 was the best catch rate being recorded with the timeline of 3 months fished. At this stage only a few Long Line operators were engaged in the Fishery.

The Fishing vessels were all Cook Island flagged and offloaded in American Samoa, with transshipment of all vessels at Niue designated port, with 100 percent observer coverage during transshipment.

At the 10th Annual WCPFC meeting in Cairns, Niue declared its longline and purse seine limits. These limits are incorporated into the National Pelagic Management and Development Plan.

3. Annual Data Summary and Species Catch Distribution by Longline vessels from 2009-2013.

In 2013, fishing in Niue's EEZ by Foreign flagged fishing vessels began in June. Although similar numbers of vessels fished in Niue's EEZ in past years, 2013 saw a lot more effort exerted which is reflected in a higher total catch in 2013. Albacore remains the dominant catch, followed by yellowfin, then bigeye (Table 1).

Catch in 2013 is concentrated in the northern part of the island compared to previous years (Figures 1, 2 and 3). Most vessels seemed to fish en route to the next EEZ. Vessels that do spend a considerable amount of time in Niue's EEZ distribute their efforts over a wider area.

Year	Vessels	Catch (metric tonnes)									
		ALB	BET	SKJ	YFT	BLM	BUM	MLS	SWO	OTHER	TOTAL
2009	3	138	7	5	12	1	1	4	1	8	183
2010	6	97	4	1	8	0	1	0	0	5	120
2013	6	234	11	5	29	0	11	1	2	19	312

Table1. Annual catch estimates in Niue's EEZ. Data Source: Operational (logsheet) catch/effort data, unraised. The catch for 2010 is for the first 4 months of the year before fishing operations by the fisheries partner ceased.

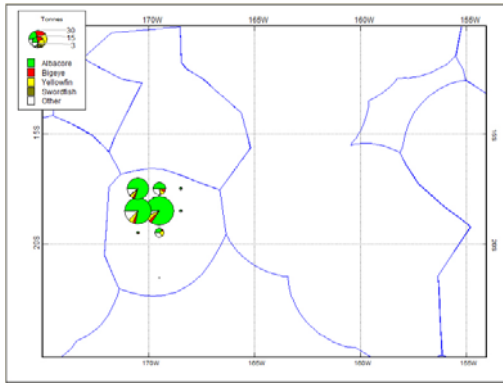


Figure 1. 2009 Longline catch distribution by species (source: unraised logsheet data)

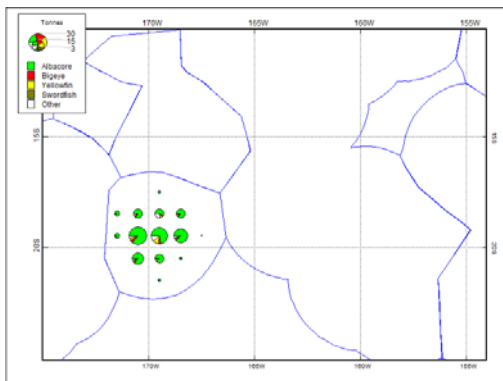


Figure 1. 2010 Longline catch distribution by species (source: unraised logsheet data)

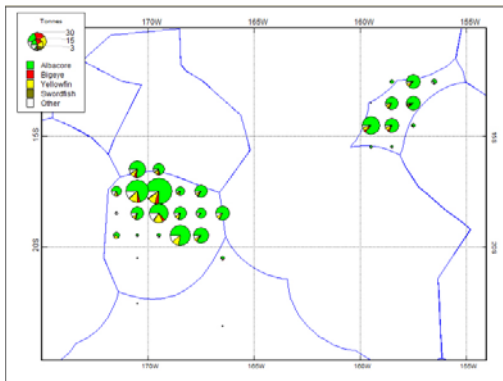


Figure 1. 2013 Longline catch distribution by species (source: unraised logsheet data)

4. Flag State Reporting

Niue is not a flag state

5. Coastal State Reporting

Niue has a Management plan for pelagic fishing, with limits set on main tuna species targeted based on the best catch rates and those neighbouring countries catches that are similar in size and rate.

6. Socio-economic factors

At the artisanal level, all pelagic fish are sold per kilo at the same price to restaurants and to the general public. All fishermen whether they are subsistence or chartered fishermen sell fish. Rarely fish is available at a shop in the capital with fishermen preferring to sell directly to customers at the local market place or to restaurants.

7. Disposal of catch

The Disposal of catch is at designated port of transshipment.

Sharks are discarded as per Niue's legislation and National Pelagic Management plan. In 2013 Vessels were using log sheets that did not require them to record sharks by species. This year the vessels are using log sheets that allow them to record sharks by species.

8. Onshore developments

The processing plant is still inactive and most shore developments are of access to onshore facilities (wharf upgrade).

The wharf upgrade is to provide ease of access and safer offload to fishing vessels given the open nature of Niue's only port. This was identified by the last operations as one key area for improvement.

9. Future Prospects of the fishery

Using the pelagic development plan to determine the set amount of catch for future prospects which will be a result of partnerships and can be long-term or short-term.

10. Status of tuna fishery data collection systems

The process of data collection is enshrined in the Licensing terms and conditions of foreign vessels fishing in Niue waters. Reporting and data collection is mandatory with authorised Officers rights to set the terms, though these are based on data requirements of SPC and WCPFC.

Penalties are imposed on denying or refusal of access to data.

Artisanal fisheries data collection is carried out per quarter of the year. Boat fishermen use the artisanal tuna logbook to record size and effort of tuna catch and other species. Canoe fishermen will be recording their catch data using the new logbooks which are specifically designed for Niue's Coastal fisheries data requirements and use of these logbooks will begin in August.

11. Research activities covering target and non-target species

A wahoo tagging program was done in 2010 with satellite tags and using the ARGOS satellite tracking device to track the movement of wahoo.

With the introduction of new canoe logbooks, Niue's Coastal Fisheries will gain valuable insight into the catch rates and distribution and other relevant factors of target and non-target species.

Research involving offshore target and non-target species is subject to the availability of funding and work required under the National Pelagic Management and Development Plan.