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

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THAILAND

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

PART 1: INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

**THAILAND ANNUAL FISHERY REPORT
DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATIVES**



Scientific data was provided to the Commission in accordance with the decision relating to the provision of scientific data to the Commission by 6 July 2014	No
If no, please indicate the reason(s) and intended actions:	There is some delays in acquisition of data and internal process

I. Introduction

Thailand's Exclusive Economic Zone is rich in fishery resources. Therefore, its fishing sector has contributed tremendously to the country's economy and society. Marine fisheries of Thailand have been rapidly developed and ranked among the top-ten fishing nations in the world. Apart from generating substantial incomes and employment, it also supported the various downstream industries, e.g. ship building and fish processing industries. Fishery products are a main source of animal protein in the diet, and are an important foreign currency earner. Fishery products are not only consumed domestically, but also exported. The value of fish exported has continued to grow.

At its 10th Regular Session in December 2013, the Commission, agreed to renew CNM status for 2014 to Thailand on the understanding that Thailand will cooperate fully with the Commission in the acquisition and exchange of fishery information and data. WCPFC 10 noted the need for cooperation between Thailand and the Commission and the commitment from Thailand to provide data from canneries located in Thailand to assist in the work of the Commission. **The participatory rights of Thailand in the WCPO are limited to the provision of carrier and bunker vessels only.**

II. Annual Fisheries Information

A. Annual Catch and Effort by Primary Species and Gear in the WCPFC

As a Cooperating Non-Member, Thailand has participatory rights limited to the provision of carrier and bunker vessels only. In 2013, no fishing vessels from Thailand operated in the WCPFC Competent Area. Although Thailand has 6 carrier vessels listed in the WCPFC record of fishing vessels, they didn't engage in transshipping of tuna production from this area.

B. Fishing Patterns (Catch by time/area)

In 2013, Thai fishing vessels didn't fish for tunas in the WCPFC Competent Area.

C. Estimated Total Catches of Non-Target, Associated and Dependent Species

In 2013, Thai fishing vessels didn't fish for tunas in the WCPFC Competent Area.

D. Domestic Tuna Fisheries

Thai vessels are fishing for neritic tunas in the Gulf of Thailand and in the Andaman Sea. The main commercial species of small tunas caught are frigate tuna, kawakawa, and longtail tuna destined mainly for tuna canneries. The other species found with a small quantity in the Gulf of Thailand and in the Andaman Sea include dogtooth tuna, bullet tuna, and skipjack. Fishing gears employed are light luring purse seine, Thai purse seine, and king mackerel gill net.

Thailand contributes small amount of tuna production each year. Table 1 shows its tuna fisheries production (including tunas, bonitos, and billfishes) compared to the world total tuna catch from 2007 to 2012. Catch of tunas decreased

from 63,963 tons in 2009 to 39,807 tons in 2012.¹ The production in 2012 accounted for 0.55 % of the world tuna production.

Table 1 Tuna Fishery Production of Thailand during 2008-2012 (Ton)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	% share of 2012
Thailand	59,874	63,963	52,550	39,403	39,807	0.55
World	6,608,721	6,731,853	6,765,208	6,824,655	7,181,723	100.00

Source: FAO

Apart from regular fishing for neritic tunas within its national jurisdiction, Thailand has developed a large-scale tuna fishing fleet and ventured out to fish in the distant areas since 2000. In fact, the area of fishing operation is specifically in the Indian Ocean due to its proximity to Thailand.

Having a large scale tuna canning industry and situating in a strategic location, Thailand has a pivotal policy and aspiration to operate in tuna fishing in the Indian Ocean particularly in the high seas with a view to providing steady supply of raw materials to support the need and requirement of our rapid development in tuna canneries. If such aspiration becomes successful, Thailand will be able to reduce its dependency on importing of a large quantity of tunas around the world and is capable of providing raw material to its tuna canning industry.

With respect to tuna fisheries in the Indian Ocean, Thailand apparently has authorized 3 large-scale tuna longliners to operate in the IOTC Competent Area. In addition to the above-mentioned tuna fishing vessels, 3 Thai research vessels have been used to conduct scientific researches in the Indian Ocean.

Currently, Thailand still lacks of capacity to venture to operate in the WCPO.

E. Tuna Processing Industry

Rapid fishery development has driven Thailand to become one of the leading countries in tuna industry in particular having tuna canneries and exporting of tuna products. Due to limited national tuna fishery production, Thailand has to rely on import of a large amount of tunas in order to meet the high demand of raw material in its tuna processing industry each year.

Four main tuna species has been used for tuna cannery which are skipjack, albacore, yellowfin and bigeye. In 2013, Thailand imported 785,174.50 tons of tuna production with the value of 53,236.52 million baht (Table 2). Around 75% of the imported tuna production was skipjack, followed by yellowfin and albacore. The main suppliers were Taiwan (19 %), U.S.A. (14 %), Vanuatu (11 %), South Korea (10 %), Indonesia (7 %), China (6 %) and Japan (6 %).

¹ Tuna statistic in 2008 onwards shows only catches taken by the Thai fishing vessels in its Exclusive Economic Zone. The declining production does not what so ever represents the depletion of neritic tuna fish stocks.

Table 2 Import of Tuna Production of Thailand in 2013 (Ton)

	2013	% share of 2013
Skipjack	589,106.22	75
Yellowfin	107,662.92	14
Albacore	48,481.72	6
Bigeye	15,968.22	2
Bluefin	51.47	0
Southern Bluefin	0.98	0
Other	23,902.98	3
Total	785,174.50	100

Source: Adapted from the Customs Department

In 2013, Thailand also exported 564,839.16 tons of tuna products to international market with the value of 81,674.99 million baht (Table 3). Out of the total export, canned tuna products accounted for 537,235.35 tons. The remaining was processed tuna products. The U.S.A. was the main market which accounted for 18.5 % of the total products, followed by Australia (7.5 %), Japan (7 %), Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (6.6 %), Egypt (6.4 %), Canada (5 %), Saudi Arabia (4 %), United Kingdom(3 %) and U. Arab Emirates (2%).

Table 3 Export of Tuna Products of Thailand in 2013 (Ton)

	2013	% share of 2013
Skipjack	539,431.12	95.5
Yellowfin	10,593.41	2
Albacore	82.85	0
Bigeye	251.43	0
Other	14,480.35	2.5
Total	564,839.16	100

Source: Adapted from the Customs Department

III. Cooperation between Thailand and the WCPFC

Currently, Thailand is a Cooperating Non-Member (CNM) to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). It has participated in the WCPFC through the principle specified in the Conservation and Management Measure (CMM) 2009-11 that it has an interest in the fishery in the Competent Area. It requested the Commission for the status of CNM and was accorded for 2011. Stipulated in the CMM 2009-11, the renewal of this status must be requested every year, and the Tenth Regular Sessions agreed to grant a renewal of the CNM status for Thailand for 2014. In addition, the participatory rights of Thailand in the WCPO are limited to the provision of carrier and bunker vessels. Nevertheless, Thailand has not exercised its participatory right by operating of any carrier and bunker vessels in the WCPO in the year 2013.

As a CNM, Thailand has continued its cooperative role in acquisition and exchange of fishery information and data from canneries located in Thailand with a view to facilitating the work of the Scientific Committee. Data from Thai canneries were distributed to WCPFC in 2013. On top of this, Thailand commits to comply with conservation and management measures adopted by the WCPFC. Although, Thailand has no fishing vessels operating in the Competent Area, it accepts high seas boarding and inspection procedures.

IV. National Research Programs

The following research programs are carried out by the Department of Fisheries of Thailand in 2013:

a. The Sampling Program on Tuna Longline Vessels Unloading in Phuket

The program has been carried out and provides a lot of useful information regarding foreign tuna longliners fishing in Indian Ocean and landing their catches at the Phuket fishing port, Thailand.

The purpose of this program is as follows:

- Enhance data collection and processing system for tuna fisheries in Thailand
- Improve and update data collection on tuna longline fisheries in the East Indian Ocean as well as information on the activities, nominal catches, catch breakdown by species and size composition for each species caught by tuna longliners unloaded in Phuket.

The activities involve collecting the number of landings, catch, vessel operating (no. of trip), weight samples, interviewing, biological samples and other activities such as collection of information of shark, other species, and study age of the fish by using otolith.

b. The Neritic Tuna Fisheries in Thailand

The department of Fisheries has engaged in data collection and processing system for neritic tuna fisheries in Thailand. The purpose of the program is to assess the precision of the current catch estimates by review and analysis of the existing data and comparing with catch estimates derived from alternate sampling activities. The landing surveys are conducted to collect fishing and biological data of neritic tuna, pelagic fish, and by-catch species. The activities at the landing places include collecting catch, effort (no. of trip), sizes by individual total length for pelagic fish and fork length for neritic tuna and tuna-like species and weight. For 2012-2013, the Department of Fisheries has carried out collection of data on tongol fisheries and the stock analysis will be undertaken.

c. Tuna Resources Survey in the Eastern Indian Ocean

Thailand has conducted tuna resources survey in the Indian Ocean since 1988 (M.V. MAHIDOL has started since 1995). The purpose of the research program is to collect the relevant information of tuna distribution in the Indian Ocean in particular the Eastern Indian Ocean. The information derived from the research survey includes catch composition, catch rate, size of caught tunas, fork length frequency, and length-weight relationship. In addition, the information on water current, wave and wind condition, and other oceanographic observation has been collected.