NORTHERN COMMITTEE
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REPORT ON CMM 2013-09 (PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA)

WCPFC-NC10-2014/DP-01 (Rev.1)

JAPAN

FISHERIES AGENCY
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES, GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN
1-2-1, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8907, Japan

July 31, 2014

Professor Glenn Hurry
Executive Director
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
P.O. Box 2356, Kolonia,
Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, 96941

Dear Executive Director Hurry,

In accordance with paragraph 8 of the conservation and management measure for Pacific bluefin tuna (CMM2013-09), Japan submits a report explaining measures and actions it has introduced and been implementing for Pacific bluefin tuna (PBF).

Sincerely yours,

Takashi Koya

Takashi KOYA
Alternative Japanese Commissioner to WCPFC

Overview of Japanese PBF Fisheries

Japan caught 12,676 tons of PBF on annual average basis between 2002-2004, which is the reference year of the CMM 2013-09. Almost all PBF catch were made in the areas under the Japanese jurisdiction and primarily within the territorial waters and internal waters. Also, most of the fisheries activities targeting PBF are seasonal and those fishing vessels target other species outside the PBF fishing season.

The annual catches of PBF by major fishing gears on average in 2002-2004 were as follows; purse seine: 7,643 tons, troll: 2,149 tons, set net: 945 tons, longline: 1,317 tons, and other fisheries: 622 tons.

Management framework and catch trends of those fisheries before the strengthening of the PBF management were as follows;

(1) **Purse seine fisheries** are managed under the licensing system by the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The number of vessels has been decreasing year by year. The main target species of purse seine are jack mackerel and mackerel, and PBF are caught only during its migration season in the following three fishing grounds:
(i) western Japan ground: 0-1 year old fish are caught by 22 vessels. The catch had been increasing since 1990s but decreased in 2012 and 2013.
(ii) Sea of Japan ground: mainly adult fish are caught by 18 vessels.
(iii) Pacific ground: mainly adult fish are caught by 26 vessels.

(2) **Troll** is conducted by small artisanal vessels (smaller than 5 GRT) with one or two fishermen on board. This fishing is traditionally conducted throughout Japan, frequently in isolated islands and remote peninsulas. Most of the fishing grounds are within the territorial waters. The fishing season is a few months and those vessels are engaged in other fisheries such as squid jigging or bottom longline when PBF does not migrate. Because of those circumstances, no management measures for PBF fishing was established before 2011 by neither the national nor prefectural governments and therefore, it was impossible to identify even how many vessels were engaged in PBF fishery annually. On the other hand, since the PBF catch by troll calculated through sales slips from fish markets had been stable, the priority for the management of troll fishery was to understand the current situation for future effort management.

(3) **Set nets** are managed through the licensing system by the governors of prefectures. The catch of set nets fluctuates substantially year by year but was not increasing in the long

run. The number of set net licensed was approximately 1,800. On the other hand, it was difficult for each prefectural government to comprehend the overall picture of PBF management and therefore it was important for the national government to set a grand policy towards the restriction of increase.

(4) **Longline** vessels are managed through ministerial licensing system. The main target species of longline are bigeye, yellowfin, and albacore, and PBF catch by about 688 vessels is seasonal and requires different configuration of fishing gear. The catch is also decreasing.

(5) Most of **other fisheries** were managed through licensing system, but some of them allowed open entry. Their catch fluctuated but was not increasing in the long run. Therefore, it was considered important to comprehend the current situation for the future effort management of fisheries with open entry.

Measures Japan Introduced for PBF Management

As stated above, most of the Japanese PBF catch are made within the territorial or internal waters of Japan, where WCPFC CMMs are not legally applicable. However, the government of Japan has a policy of implementing a PBF conservation program applicable to the entire PBF fishing activities, based upon WCPFC decisions and ISC advice.

1. Purse seine fishery: Set catch limits

(1) Catch limit for juvenile fish

An annual catch limit of juvenile PBF – smaller than 30kg – has been in place in purse seine fishery since 2011. The catch limit for 2014 is 4,250 mt - 15% reduction from 02-04 average catch (5,000t).

(2) Catch limit for adult fish

In addition to the above catch limit for juvenile fish established under WCPFC measures, another catch limit of 2,000mt for adult PBF has been introduced during June-August in purse seine fishery operating in the Sea of Japan since 2011.

2. Artisanal fisheries: Registration → Licensing

(1) Registration system (ended in March 31, 2014)

For artisanal fishery – mostly troll fishery– operating in the Sea of Japan and Eastern China Sea, a registration scheme was introduced as of April 1st, 2011, under which all small scale fishing vessels fishing for PBF were required to register. Such registration was accompanied by mandatory reporting of their catch. This registration scheme has been introduced to

small scale fishing vessels operating in the Pacific side in April 1st, 2012.

(2) Licensing system (commencing on April 1, 2014)

While registration system has provided useful information on artisanal fisheries for PBF, the system itself cannot effort. Therefore, from April 2014, the management scheme has strengthened control to the licensing system which enable the national government regulate effort. All the vessels fishing for PBF are obligated to get license from national government prior to fishing. As of April 2014, 24,086 vessels are licensed.

3. Set-net Fishery: Issued a guidance not to increase set-nets for PBF

In January 2011, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries issued an administrative guidance not to increase the number of licenses of set-nets for PBF to relevant prefectural governments which have the authority to manage this fishery.

4. Aquaculture:

(1) Introduced a registration system and mandatory reporting.

The fry used for PBF farming in Japan is mainly caught by troll fishery. Because of the stricter management of Atlantic bluefin tuna at ICCAT, it is concerned that PBF farming in Japan may increase further. Therefore, in order to collect necessary information, starting in April 2011, all PBF aquaculture sites are required to register and to report their farming activities, including information on caging and harvest. As of December 2013, 147 aquaculture sites were on the registration.

(2) Administrative instruction not to expand PBF aquaculture

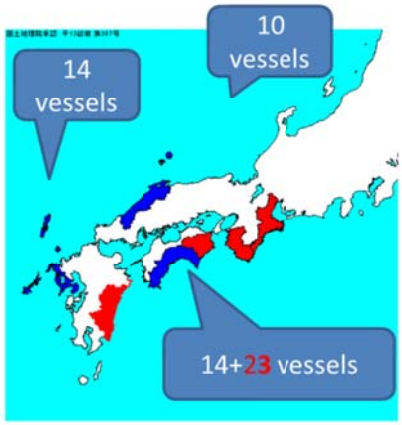
As stated above, most of wild seeds for aquaculture are caught by troll fisheries. To prevent an increase in fry catches of troll fisheries, the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries instructed prefectural governments not to increase the capacity of PBF aquacultures and cages which farm wild seeds in October 2012.

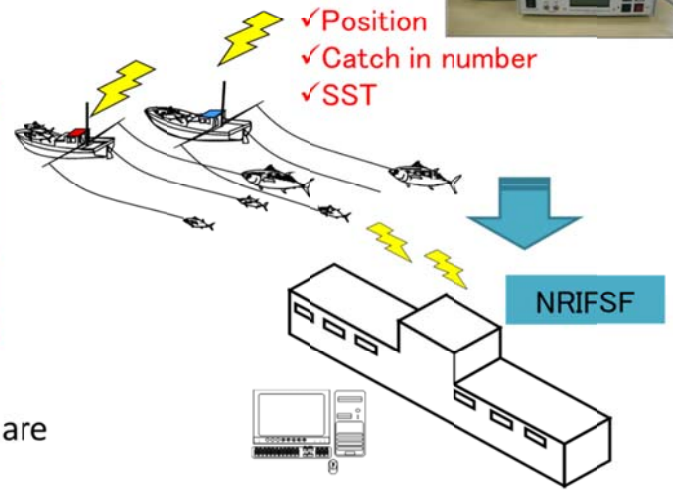
5. Monitoring recruitment of juveniles

In order to obtain quick estimation on recruitment abundance of age-0 fish, monitoring survey was started in 2011 using 24 troll boats catching seeds for farming in Nagasaki Pref. Kochi Pref. In 2014, survey is expanded by adding 4 monitoring site – Mie Pref, Wakayama Pref, Miyazaki Pref, and Shimane Pref. – with 61 boats.

Data loggers with communication functions, which can collect information on location, sea temperature and number of fish caught during operation, were equipped on the fishing boats.

This survey can monitor the quick estimation of recruitment abundance originated from each of two spawning periods such as May-June (Nansei Islands) and July-August (Sea of Japan) before main fishing season of winter to spring.





• A total of 38 (in 2013) + 23 (planed in 2014) troll vessels are selected.

6. Further reduction of juvenile catch

Upon the ISC conservation advice provided in March, the Government of Japan has committed urgent resource recovery by 50% juvenile catch reduction commencing on 2015, which requires fishing industry reducing juvenile catch from 8,015t to 4,007t without exemption. Among 4,007t, 2,000t is allocated to PS and remaining 2,007t is to other fisheries including artisanal fisheries. Under this new policy, JFA (Japanese Fisheries Agency) has dispatch staff to major fishing communities, more than 40 sites as of July 31, to explain current PBF status and new policy (see attachment A for more detailed concept).

7. Import: Strengthened data collection

(1) Korea

Starting in January 2010, mandatory reporting for each import transaction has been tasked to importers in case they intend to import PBF from Korea. From March 2011, the number of size categories in the reporting format has been expanded from 5 categories to 7 categories in order to acquire more precise data on import of juvenile fish:

Before February 2011:

smaller than 2kg, 2 - 3kg, 3 - 5kg, 5 – 50kg, over 50kg

After March 2011:

smaller than 2kg, 2 - 3kg, 3 - 5kg, 5 – 10kg, 10 – 30kg, 30 - 50kg, over 50kg

Korean exemption for catch limit has removed at the WCPFC 10, and its catch limit for 2014 is 1,220t. Since Japan's PBF import volume less than 30kg from Korea has reached 819.1t (about 70%) by the end of July, JFA requested Korean to comply with catch limit and instruct fishing industry not to export its PBF caught over the catch limit. In addition, Japan hold meetings with importers and requested due import.

(2) Mexico

Starting in February 2011, mandatory reporting has been tasked to importers in case they intend to import PBF from Mexico.

8. Work with other IATTC members

(1) In May 2011, the NC chair held a meeting with IATTC members who have fisheries for PBF in the eastern Pacific. Japan assisted the NC Chair's work and joined the meeting.
(2) During the 82nd IATTC annual meeting held in July 2011 at La Jolla, the Director General of Fisheries Agency of Japan sent a letter to the Commissioner of Mexican Fisheries Agency (CONAPESCA) calling on Mexico to cooperate in establishing sound conservation and management measures for PBF in the eastern Pacific.
(3) During the 83rd IATTC annual meeting held in June 2012 at La Jolla, Japanese delegation cooperated with IATTC member countries so that Conservation and Management Measures for PBF during 2012 and 2013 was adopted.
(4) During the 85th IATTC annual meeting held in June 2013 at Veracruz (Mexico), Japanese delegation cooperated with IATTC member countries so that Conservation and Management Measures for PBF during 2014 was adopted.
(5)At the 87th IATTC annual meeting in July 2014 at Lima (Peru), Japanese delegation consulted with major stakeholders, Mexico and US, but could not reach agreement. The three parties agreed to continue dialogue with aim to getting agreement by October.

9. International Trade of Products derived from Pacific Bluefin tuna

- PBF Import in 2013

  According to the trade statistics of Japan, Japan imported 4,116 t of PBF; 3,537t (86%) from Mexico followed by Korea (560t, 14%), NZ (16t), Palau (1.7t). (Table1 and Figure1) The lowest import volume was observed in July (60 t) while the highest was observed in May (833 t). (Figure 2)

- PBF Export in 2013

  20.7 t of PBF were exported from Japan in 2013; 65% was to China and 27% was to Thailand. (Table2 and Figure3)

Table1 and Figure1: The amount of import of PBF (Jan.-Dec. 2013) (unit :t)

	Fresh	Frozen	Total
Mexico	2,446	1,091	3,537
Korea	536	23	560
New Zealand	16	0	16
Palau	2	0	2
USA	1	0	1
Canada	0	0	0
Australia	0	0	0
Total	3,001	1,114	4,116

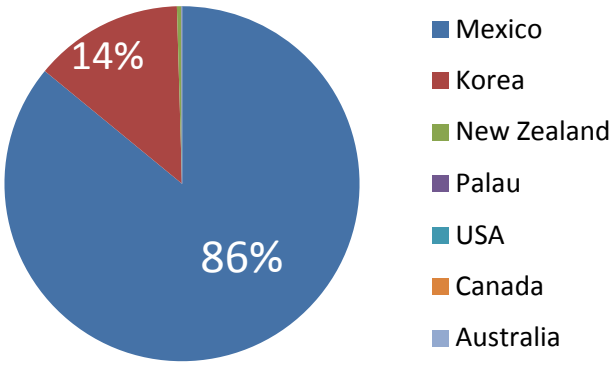


Figure 2: The monthly amount of import of PBT (Jan.-Dec. 2013) (unit : t)

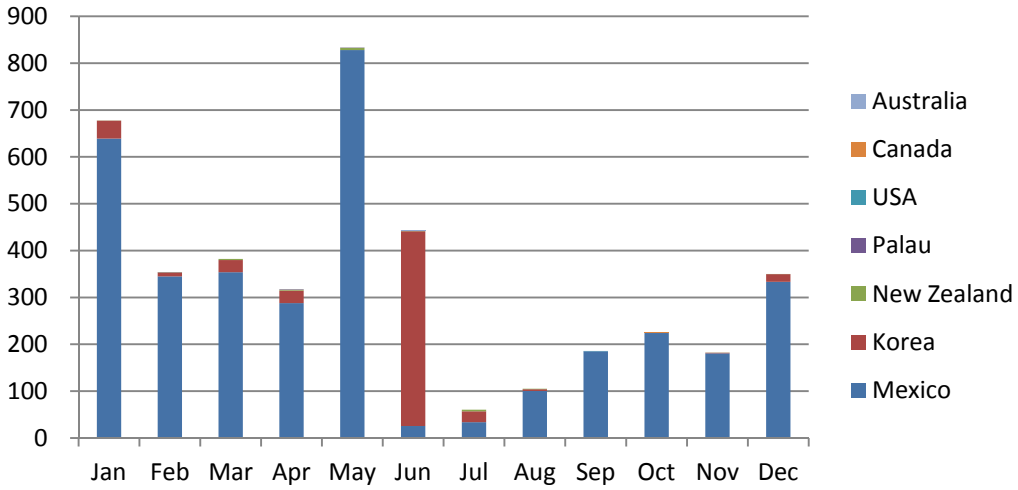
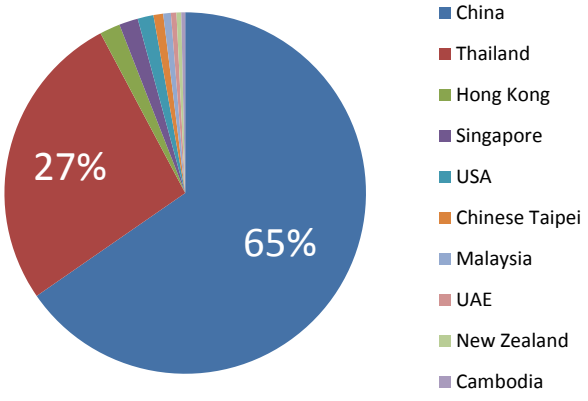


Table2 and Figure3: The amount of export of PBF (Jan.-Dec. 2013) (unit : t)

	Fresh
China	13.5
Thailand	5.6
Hong Kong	0.4
Singapore	0.4
USA	0.3
Chinese Taipei	0.2
Malaysia	0.1
UAE	0.1
New Zealand	0.1
Cambodia	0.1
Total	20.7



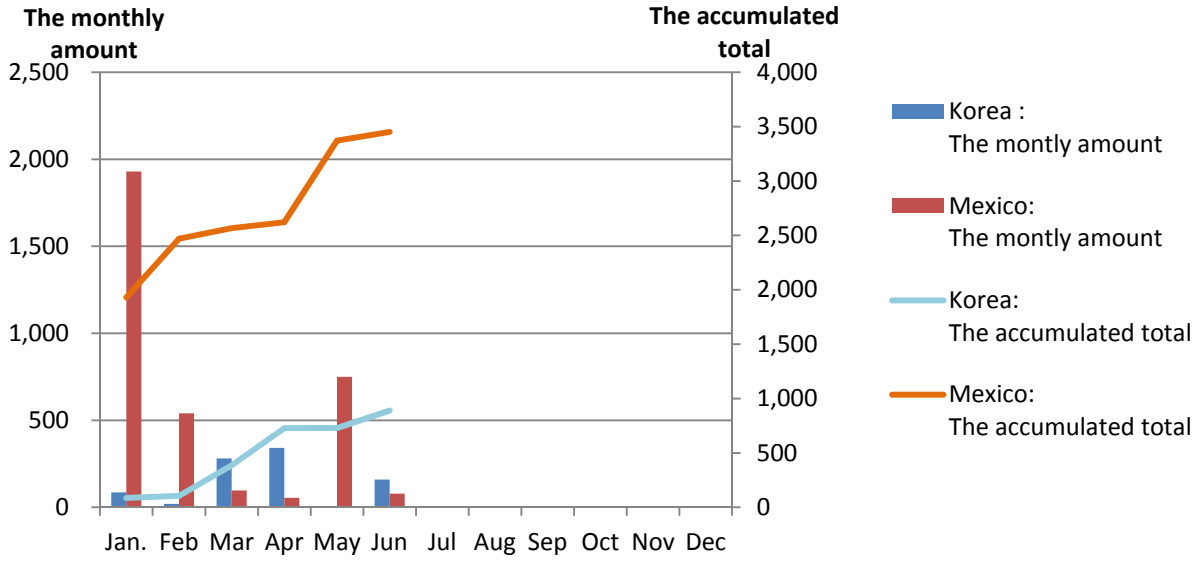
● PBF Import in 2014 (As of 30, June)

In addition to the trade statistics in 2014, import data from Korea and Mexico as of 30 June are available in accordance with article 10, the Special Law for Conservation Measure of Tuna Resources The amount of import PBF from Mexico was 3,451 t*, and 890t from Korea. (Figure4).

Difference of imported fish between Mexico and Korea are;
Mexico: Age 2 fish caught and exported after 1 year farming
Korea: Age 1 fish exported immediately after caught.

*The amount of PBF was underestimated because some importers do not submit the information about their import.

Figure4: The monthly amount of import of PBF (Jan.-June. 2014) (unit: t)



Attachment A

PBF Management Scheme in Japan(1)

	No. of Vessel	Catch (05-09)	Main target (age)	Current Management Scheme			After 2015 Management Scheme
Purse Seine (Western Japan)	22	6,207 t	0-1	Licensing (Limited entry)	Catch limit for juvenile (4,250 t) －30% (since 2014)	Effort Limit + Catch Limit	Current Effort Limit + *Juvenile catch limit* **2,000t** + Current Catch limit for adult (Sea of Japan)
Purse Seine (Pacific side)	26	729 t	2,3～	Licensing (Limited entry)	Catch limit for juvenile (500t) －46% (since Apr. 2012)		
Purse Seine (Sea of Japan)	18	2,431 t	3～	Licensing (Limited entry)	Catch limit for adult (2,000 t) －13 % (since Apr. 2011)		

PBF Management Scheme in Japan (2)

	No. of Vessel	Catch (05-09)	Main target (age)	Current Management Scheme			After 2015 Management Scheme
Artisanal Fishery	24,086	2,539 t (internal water and territorial sea) (Troll)	0-1	Licensing	Licensing system and mandatory reporting (since April 2014)	Effort Limit	Current Effort Limit + *Juvenile catch limit* **2,007t**
Set Net	1,800 (No. of license)	1,940 t (internal water and territorial sea)	All	Licensing by prefectural government (Limited entry)	Administrative instruction by Minister not to increase the number of licenses (since Jan. 2010)	Effort Limit	
Longline	688 (No. of license)	1,597 t (EEZ)	4～	Licensing (Limited entry)	-	Effort Limit	
Aquaculture	147 (No. of sites)	-		Licensing by prefectural government (Limited entry)	Registration system and mandatory reporting (since Jan. 2011) Ministerial order **to prohibit increase of farming cages** (since October 2012)		-

Concept for juvenile catch reduction in Japan (3)

- **Upon the ISC conservation advice provided, JFA committed urgent resource recovery by 50% juvenile catch reduction commencing on 2015**
- **This requires fishing industry reducing juvenile catch from 8,015t to 4,007t.**
- **Among 4,007t, 2,000t is allocated to Purse seine and remaining 2,007t is to other fisheries including artisanal.**

Concept for juvenile catch reduction in Japan (4)

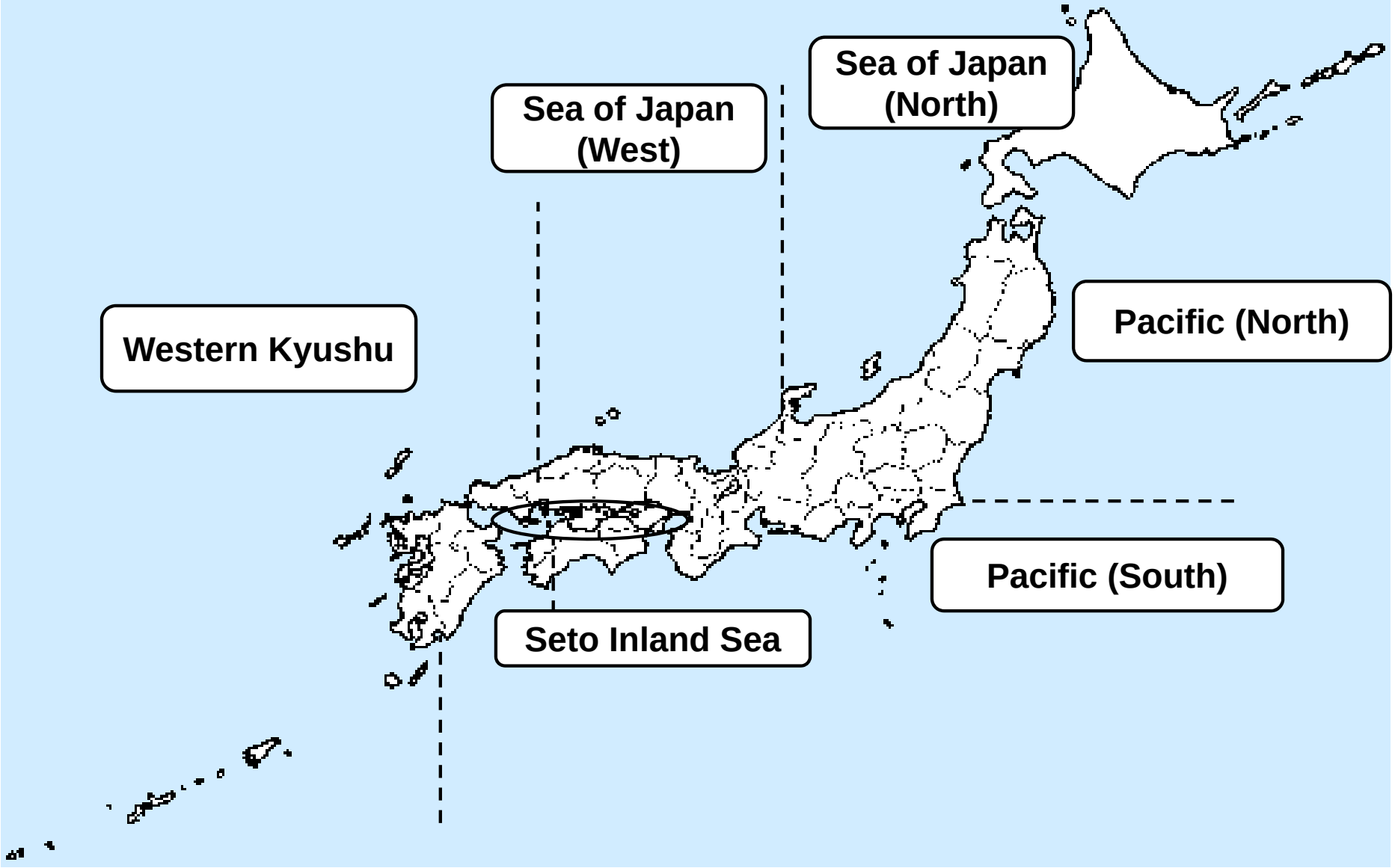
For the compliance purpose, JFA will introduce measures as follows:

- **PS: Catch limit is allocated to the PS association and all catch is landed at designated ports subject to monitoring.**

- **Others:**

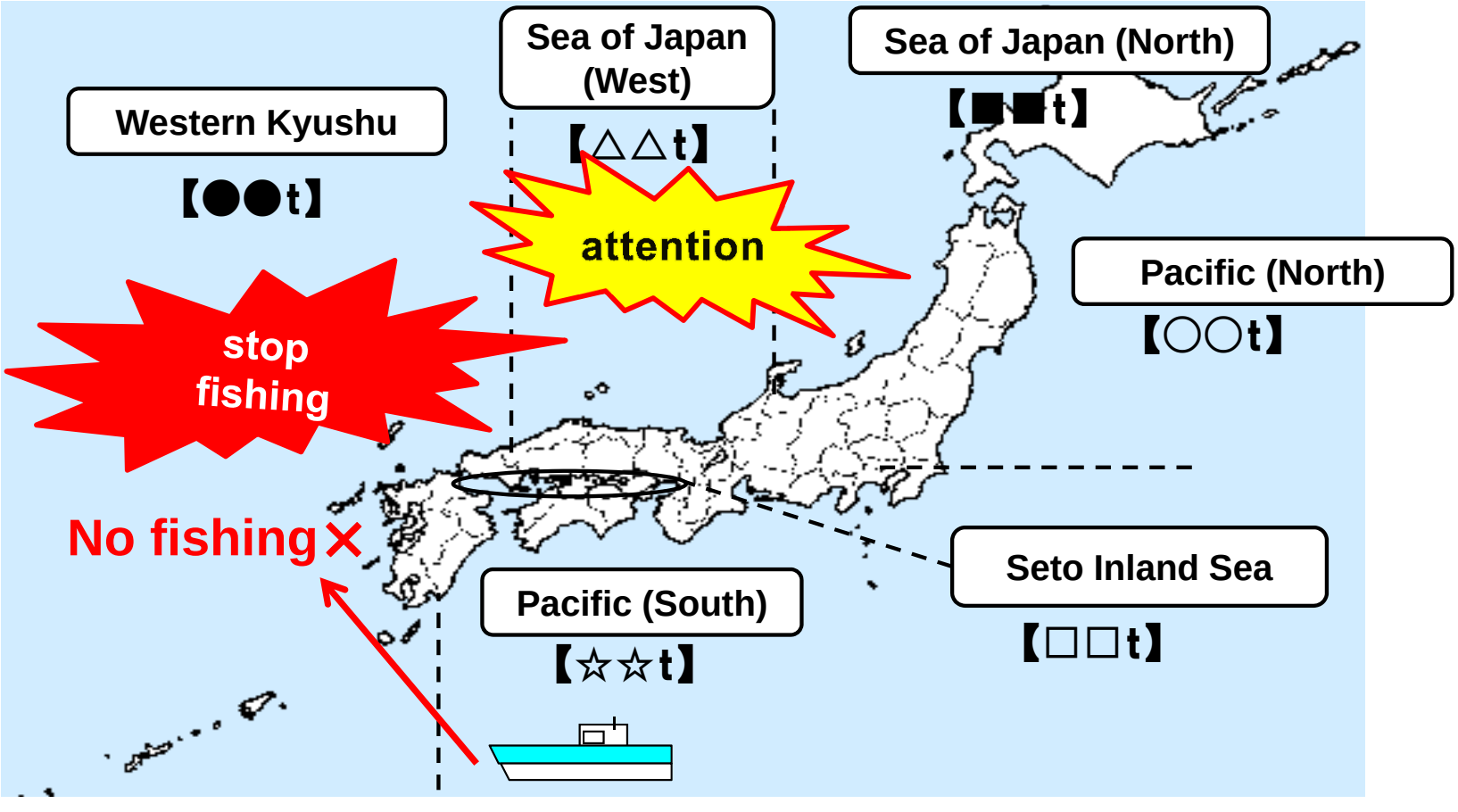
1. **Japan's coast is divided into 6 areas and catch limit is allocated to area respectively.**
2. **Monitoring is conducted on area basis.**
3. **When catch volume in an area is reaching catch limit allocated, JFA will announce "Alarm" and/or "Stop fishing" not only to fishermen but also buyers, processors and consumers.**

Location of 6 Areas



Alarming by catch degree

- FAJ will announce “alarm” based on the following criteria:
- When catch exceeds 70% of the limit: “attention” ;
  when catch exceeds 80% of the limit: “alarm” ;
  when catch exceeds 90% of the limit: “urgent alarm” ;
  when catch reaches 95% of the limit: “stop fishing”

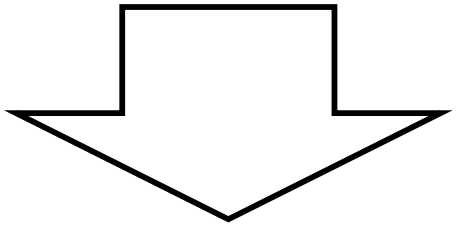


Catch limit is monitored in fishing year July 1 to June 30

○ Practical difficulties for managing in calendar year.

●Winter (October to February) is main fishing season for Troll.

○ Based on the past catch pattern, it is practical that catch limit is monitored in fishing year - 1 July to 30 June – which is corresponding to fish year adopted by ISC.



Catch Pattern