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**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMISSION**

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

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**PHILIPPINES**

**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE WESTERN and  
CENTRAL PACIFIC FISHERIES  
COMMISSION (WCPFC)**

**PART1: INFORMATION ON FISHERIES,  
RESEARCH AND STATISTICS**

**PHILIPPINE ANNUAL FISHERY REPORT  
UPDATE**

June 2015

Scientific data was provided to the Commission in accordance with the decision relating to the provision of scientific data to the Commission by 30 April, 2014	Yes
If no, please indicate the reason(s) and intended actions:	

# PHILIPPINE ANNUAL FISHERY REPORT 2015

Noel C. Barut  
Elaine G. Garvilles

## Summary

The Philippines expresses its strong commitment to promote effective management in order to achieve the long-term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks in the western and central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) in accordance with the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention, the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, and the WCPF Convention. In giving effect to the provisions of the WCPF Convention, the Philippines upholds that conservation and management measures developed by the Commission, including the recent CMM 2013-01 on the conservation and management of bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack in WCPO.

There are various ongoing activities such as the National Stock Assessment Program (NSAP), Philippine Fisheries Observer Program (PFOP), catch documentation/validation, Vessel Monitoring System (VMS), collaborations with various government agencies (e.g. BAS, PFDA) including the tuna industry, supports Philippine efforts towards improving tuna data collection. The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has 255 trained observers and 30 trained debriefers. The VMS has already been operationalized particularly for those vessels operating in international waters (e.g. HSP1, Indian Ocean, other PIC waters).

Philippines was given limited access to High Seas Pocket 1 as Special Management Area (SMA) allowing only 36 traditional fresh/ice chilled fishing vessels operating as a group. Philippine-flagged vessels operating in HSP1 are managed under the DA-BFAR Fisheries Administrative Order 245-2 (FAO 245-2). Out of 36 catcher vessels there were thirty five (35) vessels that entered HSP1 for 2014. The total catch of these vessels operating in HSP1 for the period of January to December 2014 is around 28,634MT equal to 2,669 fishing day/s.

The provisional catch estimates for the three tuna species of concern of the WCPFC in 2014 obtained during the 8<sup>th</sup> Philippine/WCPFC Annual Tuna Catch Estimates Review Workshop were as follows: skipjack – 116,186 MT; yellowfin – 60,860 MT and bigeye – 3,172MT.

The West Pacific East Asia Oceanic Fisheries Management Project (WPEA-OFMP) funded by UNEP-GEF-WCPFC which helped strengthen national capacities and international cooperation on priority transboundary concerns relating to the conservation and management of highly migratory fish stocks in the West Pacific Ocean and East Asia (Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam) that ended last December 2013. The phase-2 of this project entitled Sustainable Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the West Pacific and East Asian Seas started this year (2015). There is also a Joint Program for Tuna Research in Sulu-Sulawesi Sea initiated by SEAFDEC. The overall goal for this joint research program is to understand the status and trends of tuna fisheries in Sulu-Sulawesi Sea through collaborative research activities to be implemented by the three (3) SEAFDEC member countries surrounding the Sulu-Sulawesi Sea, namely, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines.

Philippines through the BFAR-NFRDI and other concerned agencies together with the tuna industry is doing a lot of efforts to improve data collection and to strengthen its national capacity and international cooperation particularly on various transboundary concerns in relation to the sustainable conservation and management of highly migratory fish stocks.

## BACKGROUND

The Philippines is still one of the top fish producing countries in the world. Over 1.6 million Filipinos depend on the fishing industry for their livelihood. The Philippines is also considered a major tuna producer in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO). The fishing industry's contribution to the country's Gross Domestic Products (GDP) in 2013 was 1.7% and 1.9% at current and constant prices, respectively (*Philippine Fisheries Profile, 2013*).

Also in 2013, the foreign trade performance of the fishery industry gave a net surplus of 1,036 million dollars. With a total export value of 1,386 million US dollars and import value of 300 million US dollars. Tuna remained as the top export commodity with a collective volume of 165,757 MT for fresh/chilled/frozen, smoked/dried, and canned tuna products valued at US \$681.618 million. Canned tuna, though, constitutes bulk of tuna products being exported. In general, tuna exports increased by 192% and much higher in terms of value, 65% than the previous year. Major markets for this commodity include USA, Japan and United Kingdom. (*Philippine Fisheries Profile, 2013*).

Chilled/frozen fish comprised the bulk of the total import in terms of value. Tuna, mackerel and sardines are the major import fish commodities in 2013. Tuna has the largest import share of 30% with an import value of US \$90.92 million. Chilled/frozen tuna were mostly supplied by Papua New Guinea 8 %; Taiwan (ROC) 10.2%; Japan 2.5%; Marshall Islands, 0.5% and Korea Rep, 1.7%. Other fishery imports include mackerel, 14.7% and sardines, 5.3%. (*Philippine Fisheries Profile, 2013*).

## ANNUAL FISHERIES INFORMATION

### A. FLEET STRUCTURE

The fishing sector consists of municipal and commercial components, with the former involving vessels less than 3 GT in size, and under the jurisdiction of the Local Government Units (LGUs). The number of municipal vessels is not well documented in most areas. The larger commercial vessels (> 3GT) are required to fish outside municipal waters, beyond 15km off the shoreline and are required to secure commercial fishing vessel license (CFVL) at the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources which is subject to renewal every three (3) years. With the implementation of RA 9379 or the Handline Fishing Law, this gives a separate category for the handline vessels which were formerly considered under the municipal fishing vessels.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) classification of registered Philippine vessels operating in the Western and Central Pacific Region is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Classification of Philippine registered vessels in WCPFC.**

Source: WCPFC Website, as of -2 June 2015

Type of Vessel	Number of Registered Vessels				Total
	<250 GT	>250 - 500GT	>500 - 1,000GT	> 1,000 GT	
Bunker			1		1
Fish Carrier	167	52	14	17	250
Fishing Vessel	4		2	1	7
Handline	1				1
Longline	3	9	8		20
Mothership	8				8
Multi-purpose vessel	7			1	8
Purse seine	79	25	27	20	151
Support Vessel	362	3	3		368
<b>Total</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>814</b>

## B. ANNUAL TUNA CATCH IN THE PHILIPPINE EEZ

Since 1987, the official fishery statistics for the Philippines have been compiled by the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics (BAS), based on probability (stratified random sampling by data collectors) and non-probability surveys (interviews by regular BAS staff) surveys, supplemented by secondary data from administrative sources e.g. landings sites and ports (Vallesteros, 2002). Annual Fisheries Statistics for commercial, municipal, inland and aquaculture sectors are published for three year time frames and include volume and value of production by province and by region, information on fish prices and foreign trade statistics.

Catch breakdown by the 31 main marine species is available<sup>1</sup>. Estimates of annual bigeye and yellowfin catches for the past years have been reported as a combined catch (yellowfin/bigeye tuna) but for 2005 BAS started to separate catches for these two species of tunas (Table 2). However, there is still a need to improve the identification of these two (2) species to accurately reflect the actual catch of yellowfin and bigeye.

The annual tuna catch estimates include all the tuna catch unloaded in Philippine ports regardless where they were caught and does not separate those catches from foreign waters or whether it is caught by foreign-flagged vessel.

**Table 2. Total tuna catch, by species, for 2010-2014**

Source: BAS Annual Fisheries Statistics; 2014 data are provisional

Year	Commercial			Municipal			TOTAL
	Skipjack	Yellowfin	Bigeye	Skipjack	Yellowfin	Bigeye	
2010	177,698	85,351	8,575	50,481	61,924	3,070	<b>387,099</b>
2011	147,979	68,625	6,022	49,404	54,389	3,591	<b>330,010</b>
2012	163,026	77,730	7,912	41,327	45,698	4,568	<b>340,262</b>
2013	168,183	83,142	6,899	40,963	46,742	4,962	<b>350,891</b>
2014	194,583	94,256	6,188	39,270	45,664	4,980	<b>384,942</b>

Note: The annual tuna catch estimates for 2010-2014 includes all the tuna catch unloaded in Philippine ports regardless where they were caught and does not separate those catches from foreign waters or caught by foreign-flagged vessel which may account for around 82,331MT for 2014.

BFAR launched the catch documentation scheme which requires purse seine and ringnet operators to submit monthly logsheets report and for the canneries to submit monthly cannery unloading data. BAS is also in the process of implementing the new statistical frames and methodologies in order to address the above issue. All these efforts are geared towards improvement of the country's catch estimates.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Tuna Fisheries Catch Estimates Review Workshop last 25 - 26 May 2015 was conducted to review and validate Philippine catch estimates by species and gear type. Data from different sources, namely, BFAR (NSAP, logsheets, cannery receipts, observer), PSA, PFDA and industry were presented and reviewed. Table 3 provides a breakdown of catch by gear and species according to the process undertaken in the workshop with the current 2013 PSA estimates. After removing the foreign-flagged catch landed in the Philippines (82,331MT) from the PSA estimate, there was a difference of around 122,255MT. The difference could be due to the difficulties in estimating the diverse municipal fisheries and could be explained as possible bias in the probability surveys due to very low coverage. The workshop participants noted that while the industrial fleet estimates are now becoming more reliable, there is still

<sup>1</sup> Around 20% of the municipal catch and 6-8% of the commercial landings are not captured by these 30 species

some problem in determining and validating the estimates of the small-scale municipal fisheries that needs to be resolved in the near future. One of the activities that were suggested to address this issue was to conduct a study to review of NSAP sampling procedure and extrapolation of catch estimation to non-NSAP Area in the Philippine tuna fisheries, please refer to the 6<sup>th</sup> WPEA-NSAP Tuna Data Review Workshop report.

**Table 3. Reconciliation of 2014 Tuna Catch Estimates by Gear and Species with the 2014 BAS Total Tuna Catch Estimates (in MT)**

Source: Eight Philippine/WCPFC Annual Tuna Catch Estimates Review Workshop Report, May 2015

<b>GEAR/SPECIES</b>	<b>SKJ</b>	<b>YFT</b>	<b>BET</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Purse seine	61,924	14,972	1,257	<b>78,153</b>
Ringnet	37,885	7,118	499	<b>45,502</b>
Hook-and-line	10,180	35,359	1,261	<b>46,800</b>
Others	6,197	3,411	155	<b>9,763</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>116,186</b>	<b>60,860</b>	<b>3,172</b>	<b>180,218</b>

Also included in the tuna catch estimates are catches of Philippine-flagged vessels fishing in high seas pocket #1 (HSP1). In 2013, Philippines was given limited access to High Seas Pocket 1 as Special Management Area (SMA) allowing only 36 traditional fresh/ice chilled fishing vessels operating as a group. Philippine-flagged vessels have been operating under the Regulations and Implementing Guidelines on Group Tuna Purse Seine Operations in High Seas Pocket Number 1 as a Special Management Area (DA-BFAR-FAO 245-2). Out of 36 catcher vessels there were thirty five (35) vessels that entered HSP1 for 2014. The total catch of these vessels operating in HSP1 for the period of January to December 2014 is around 28,634MT equal to 2,669 fishing day/s.

Tuna catch breakdown by gear is not available from the present Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA, formerly BAS) national statistics publication. However, the WCPFC Tuna Fishery Yearbook has also provided an estimated breakdown of catch by gear (Table 4).

No other fishing by foreign flag vessels is permitted in the Philippines EEZ, but a considerable amount of IUU fishing, based on the regularity of apprehensions of vessels illegally fishing in Philippine waters, would seem to occur, much of it involving tuna vessels. A desk study carried out in 1995 (PTRP, 1995) concluded that IUU longline catches of up to 10,000MT (40% yellowfin) may have been taken in some years.

Landings/ transshipments by foreign longline vessels are permitted in Davao (Toril) port, where around 2,500 - 4,000MT (2009 – 2014) of mostly tuna is landed annually (Table 8). Over half is retained for processing and consumption, with the rest transshipped by air. Most of these retained catch do not pass the export quality standards and import permit is not necessary since the DA Secretary has signed a certificate of necessity. It is also assumed that all of this catch is taken outside Philippine waters.

**Table 4. Estimated catch of oceanic tuna species, by gear type, for 2009 – 2013 in Western and Central Pacific Oceans (in MT)**

Source: WCPFC Tuna Fishery Yearbook 2013

Year/Species	Handline	Hook-and-Line	Longline	Purse seine	Ringnet	Others	Total
<b>2009</b>							
Skipjack	-	23,899		157,707	29,862	1,355	212,823
Yellowfin	7,768	43,172	484	46,561	7,347	1,327	106,659
Bigeeye	330	2,929	59	4,839	291	15	8,463
Total	8,098	70,000	543	209,107	37,500	2,697	327,945
<b>2010</b>							
Skipjack	131	25,200	-	124,427	26,417	2,167	178,342
Yellowfin	11,313	43,400	484	37,979	5,363	1,500	100,039
Bigeeye	284	1,400	59	4,784	218	365	7,110
Total	11,728	70,000	543	167,190	31,998	4,032	285,491
<b>2011</b>							
Skipjack	62	6,600	-	97,124	21,667	1,149	126,602
Yellowfin	10,577	13,000	146	32,839	5,677	721	62,960
Bigeeye	225	600	777	2,033	579	1	4,215
Total	10,864	20,200	923	131,996	27,923	1,871	193,777
<b>2012</b>							
Skipjack	439	10,600	-	113,817	23,255	3,078	151,189
Yellowfin	14,449	8,400	61	45,381	5,590	1,247	75,128
Bigeeye	508	1,000	248	4,466	655	43	6,920
Total	15,396	20,000	309	163,664	29,500	4,368	233,237
<b>2013</b>							
Skipjack	708	10,360	-	100,077	30,714	2,910	144,769
Yellowfin	12,731	11,000	27	44,815	6,829	3,365	78,767
Bigeeye	767	440	167	3,664	449	216	5,703
Total	14,206	21,800	194	148,556	37,992	6,491	229,239

### C. ANNUAL CATCHES IN THE CONVENTION AREA

In addition to the estimated catch by Philippine vessels in the EEZ (see above), to this must be added catches by Philippines flag vessels taken outside the EEZ and elsewhere in the Convention area. The extra - EEZ catches are assumed to include those made by purse seine and ring net vessels in adjacent areas and based in overseas ports, and catches by the wide-ranging handline vessels. BFAR has already required fishing vessels such as purse seine and ringnet to adopt the logsheet system to address the above issue. The fisheries data collection system records all catch landed by Philippine registered vessels including those fish caught outside Philippine waters (e.g. PNG, PIN waters).

#### **Purse seine catches in the PIC waters**

Data on the catch by Philippine flag purse seine vessels fishing in Papua New Guinea (PNG) waters are available from the SPC Regional Database, and are summarized for the period 2010-2014 below.

**Table 5. Catch by Philippine flag purse seine vessels in PIC waters, 2010-2014.**

Source: SPC Regional Tuna Fishery Database

Year	No. of Vessels	Catch (in MT)			
		Skipjack	Yellowfin	Bigeye	Total
2010	22	43,870	27,594	1,966	73,430
2011	25	50,047	29,166	1,599	80,812
2012	25	56,501	30,452	700	87,653
2013	27	49,014	35,226	597	84,837
2014*	29	64,191	39,945	2,843	106,979

\* 2014 – preliminary; with fishing access in PNG

### Longline catches

In 2014, only one (1) distant-water Philippine longline vessel operates within the WCPFC Convention Area (WCPFC-CA) and beyond our national jurisdiction. But there were two (2) or more distant-water Philippine longline vessels that operate in the past that have been granted fishing access in other PIC waters (e.g. Kiribati), catches for these vessels are summarized below.

**Table 6. Catches of Distant – water Philippine flag longline vessel/s fishing in the WCPFC Convention Area for 2011 – 2014 (MT)**

Species	2011	2012	2013	2014
Yellowfin	145.77	60.63	27.16	2.78
Bigeye	777.06	247.83	166.56	52.90
Albacore	36.39	23.96	30.47	1.16
Others	174.96	62.66	10.69	38.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,134.18</b>	<b>398.08</b>	<b>234.87</b>	<b>95.51</b>

• Others includes marlin, swordfish and sharks

### DISPOSAL OF CATCH

Most of the **municipal** tuna catches are landed as wet fish all over the Philippines. Much of the municipal catch is processed by drying, salting, smoking etc. A portion of the municipal tuna catch would enter large scale commercial processing like the large handline-caught tuna exported as sashimi and marketed either frozen or smoked, mostly in General Santos City and possibly small amounts are sold as wet fish direct to canneries.

The **commercial** domestic tuna catch of oceanic tunas is increasingly directed towards processing by domestic canneries, based in the Philippines and elsewhere, with lesser amounts to frozen smoked operations. The estimated 124,000MT annual output of 8 canneries is mostly supplied by landings from Philippine purse seiners and ring netters, both local vessels and via carriers from overseas operations. Overseas operations also supply canneries in PNG (~50,000MT p.a.); some tuna is imported to supplement cannery supply.



Official figures for **exports of tuna products** for the period 2009-2014 are tabulated below. The first category includes chilled sashimi quality fish and frozen whole fish for tuna canning.

**Table 7. Tuna exports by commodity, 2010 –2014**

Source: NSO data, in BAS Fisheries Statistics for 2010 – 2014

<b>Tuna commodity, by volume (MT)</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
Fresh/chilled/frozen	33,688	22,027	22,910	20,177	28,808
Dried/smoked		13,933	8,000	2,725	1,460
Canned	76,801	58,071	38,796	29,660	58,660
<b>TOTAL VALUE (million USD)</b>	<b>359.38</b>	<b>314.507</b>	<b>455.10</b>	<b>664.50</b>	<b>459.83</b>

\* 2014 provisional data

## **ONSHORE DEVELOPMENTS**

### **A. HARBOR INFRASTRUCTURE**

The General Santos Fish Port Complex (GSFPC), the country’s major tuna unloading port, with 193,868 MT total unloadings in 2014, has undergone expansion and improvement. Major components of the said expansion/improvement project includes construction of deep wharves, cold storage and processing area, port handling equipment, power substation, waste water treatment plant, water supply system and other ancillary facilities. GSFPC port facilities have already met international standards for HACCP GMP-SSOP and accredited by the European Union (EU), Japan and United States. Six other major fish ports in the country are proposed for rehabilitation in the near future. The Navotas Fish Port Complex, in Metro Manila is the second largest tuna landings are recorded with unloadings of around 10,000 MT annually. Rehabilitation project for NFPC includes upgrading of port facilities (*such as roads, electrical and power system, landing quay and west breakwater*), construction of cold storage and processing plant, and waste water treatment facilities.

### **B. PROCESSING PLANTS**

There are currently 8 tuna canneries in the Philippines, 6 in General Santos and 2 in Zamboanga.

There are two Philippine-owned and operated canneries in Papua New Guinea one in Madang and another one in Lae processing around 50,000MT per year.

Most of the handline catch supply fresh and frozen sashimi grade to the export processors and some to the domestic market. There are more than 17 frozen tuna processors in the Philippines, 70% of which are located in General Santos City and supports about 3,000 jobs. Majority of its production is exported to US and European countries.

## **OTHER CMM REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. Conservation and Management Measure-2005-03 (North Pacific Albacore)**

In 2014, Philippine catches for north pacific albacore is around 118MT. Catches for this species were mainly contributed by municipal hook-and-line fishery using vessels less than 3GT, targeting yellowfin tuna, operating in the northern part of the

Philippines and seasonal in nature. Philippines has difficulty in quantifying fishing effort for this fishery due to the diverse nature of this fishery in the country. But with increased port sampling coverage by our National Stock Assessment Program (NSAP), Philippines will be able to quantify fishing effort in the coming years.

**B. Conservation and Management Measure 2007-04 (Seabirds)**

There are no reports on seabird/s interaction for 2014. Philippines has one (1) longline vessel operating in the WCPFC convention area. This longline vessel use tori-lines or scare-lines to mitigate seabird/s by-catch and interaction.

**C. Conservation and Management Measure 2009-03 (Swordfish)**

Philippines does not have vessels that mainly targets swordfish but our fleet do have some records of catches for this species of around 15MT in 2014 as by-catch for our hook-and-line fishery that are mainly operating within Philippine waters and also for one (1) longline vessel operating beyond our national jurisdiction. But none of our vessel is operating south of 20°S.

**D. Conservation and Management Measure 2010-07 (Sharks)**

Since 2009, Philippines has its own National Plan of Action for Sharks. Based on our 2014 Philippine observer report, sharks that were retained onboard are fully utilized (as defined in CMM-2010-07 paragraph 6). In 2014, a total of 31 sharks that were caught were retained and fully utilized. But there were also a total of 13 releases (e.g. silky sharks).

**E. Conservation and Management Measure 2011-03 (Protection of Cetaceans from Purse seine Operation)**

Based on 2014 Philippine Fisheries Observer report, when a cetacean was unintentionally encircled in the purse seine net during purse seine operation in HSP1, our purse seine vessel crew always tried their best effort or always took reasonable steps to ensure the cetacean safe release including stopping the net roll and not recommencing fishing operation until the animal has been released safely and alive and no longer at risk of recapture. In 2014, there were a total of 18 instances that a cetacean was unintentionally encircled by a purse seine net and these were all released alive but subsequently died.

**F. Conservation and Management Measure 2011-04 (Oceanic White-tip Shark)**

Philippines has already prohibited its vessels from retaining on board, transshipping, storing on a fishing vessel, or landing any oceanic whitetip shark, in whole or in part, in the fisheries covered by the Convention and require its vessels to release any oceanic whitetip shark that is caught as soon as possible after the shark is brought alongside the vessel, and to do so in a manner that results in as little harm to the shark as possible. In 2014, there was no instance that an oceanic white-tip was unintentionally encircled in the purse seine net during purse seine operation particularly in the HSP1.

**G. Conservation and Management Measure 2012-04 (Protection of Whale Sharks from Purse Seine Operation)**

Since 1998, whale sharks are considered protected species in the Philippines under Fisheries Administrative Order No. 193 or the Ban on the taking or catching, selling, purchasing and possessing, transporting and exporting of Whale Sharks and Manta Rays (FAO 193 series of 1998). In 2014 Philippine Fisheries Observer report, there was one (1) instance that a whale shark was unintentionally encircled in the purse seine net during purse seine operation particularly in the HSP1 but this whale shark was released safely and alive (100%).

#### **H. Conservation and Management Measure 2013-08 (Silky Sharks)**

Since the effectivity of CMM 2013-08 ( July 1, 2014), Philippines has already prohibited its vessels from retaining on board, transshipping, storing on a fishing vessel, or landing any silky sharks, in whole or in part, in the fisheries covered by the Convention and require its vessels to release any silky shark that is caught as soon as possible after the shark is brought alongside the vessel, and to do so in a manner that results in as little harm to the shark as possible. Based on the 2014 Philippine Fisheries Observer report and since the effectivity of this CMM, there was a total of 1 release for silky shark (1 – released alive but subsequently died). This was incidentally caught silky shark during purse seine operation particularly in the HSP1.

### **STATUS of TUNA FISHERY DATA COLLECTION SYSTEMS**

#### **A. LOGSHEETS DATA COLLECTION**

Since 2008, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) launched the catch documentation scheme which includes the catch and effort logsheet system for the purse seine and ringnet vessels. Aside from this BFAR also requires canneries to submit monthly cannery unloading data. TUFMAN Database and PECAN Database systems are being utilized to process the data collected from logsheets and cannery receipts, respectively. All these efforts are geared towards improving tuna statistics/data gathering. DA-BFAR Fisheries Administrative Order (FAO 238): Rules and Regulations Governing the Implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No. 1005/2008 on Catch Certification Scheme requires all vessels especially those exporting in EU market to submit catch logsheets as requirement for the issuance of Catch Certificates and this helped improve timely logsheets data compliance. Recently, BFAR Administrative Circular No. 251 (Series of 2014) entitled Traceability System for Fish and Fishing Products which establishes traceability system for wild-caught, farmed fish and other aquatic products. One of the data requirements for wild-caught fish products for traceability/documentation is to submit logsheets data.

#### **B. OBSERVER PROGRAM and VESSEL MONITORING SYSTEM (VMS)**

The BFAR regularly conducts observer training, twice in a year to recruit new observers. There are 255 trained observers (145 active) ready to board the vessels especially to those vessels intending to fish during the FAD closure period within the Philippine EEZ and for high sea pocket # 1 (HSP1) operation. All our HSP1 fishing operations have 100% observer coverage. The program also has 30 trained debriefers (10 active) to conduct debriefing procedures and protocols to the observers. There is also observer coverage to those vessels fishing in the PNG EEZ, provided by PNG NFA.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has operationalized the national VMS particularly for those vessels fishing in high sea pocket #1 (HSP1). The Bureau is continually in close collaboration with the private sector to increase VMS coverage.

There were three (3) DA-BFAR Fisheries Administrative Orders that supports the implementation the Philippine Fisheries Observer Program (PFOP) and operationalization of Vessels Monitoring System (VMS). These were FAO No. 240: Rules and Regulations in the Implementation of Fisheries Observer Program in the High Seas, FAO No. 241: Regulations and Implementation of the Vessel Monitoring System in the High Seas and FAO 245-2: Regulation and Implementing Guidelines on Group Tuna Purse Seine Operations in High Seas Pocket Number 1 as a Special Management Area.

### C. PORT SAMPLING PROGRAM

The National Stock Assessment Program (NSAP) has continued to collect port sampling data (e.g. species composition, length frequency and vessel catch and effort information) in major tuna landing sites. In 2010 – 2013, the West Pacific East Asia Oceanic Fisheries Management Project (WPEA-OFMP) was able to increase port sampling coverage covering some of the major tuna landing areas around the country. In 2014, the Philippine government through BFAR gave more funding to support expansion of the NSAP which aims to cover / monitor almost all the tuna landing areas in the country to come-up with a more reliable data particularly for the diverse municipal tuna fisheries, for our WCPFC data obligation and also for better fisheries management. Data from NSAP has been used as basis for coming up reliable tuna catch composition during the annual tuna catch estimates review workshops.

### D. UNLOADING / TRANSHIPMENT

**Transshipment** by foreign vessels is permitted in only one port in the Philippines - Davao (Toril), as noted earlier. Table 8 below lists the details of these foreign flag vessel unloadings. It should also be noted that there were two (2) transshipment events that occurred in one (1) longline vessel that fished in 2014 (Attachment 1). This vessel transshipped frozen fish species and the summary of longline catches are in Table 6.

**Table 8. Vessel Arrivals and Unloading Volumes by Foreign Vessels, Davao Fish Port**  
Source: PFDA, 2015

Year	Port Calls	Volume of Unloadings (MT)
2010	396	3,514
2011	316	2,687
2012	327	2,536
2013	297	3,994
2014	305	2,988

### RESEARCH & FUTURE ACTIVITIES COVERING TARGET & NON-TARGET SPECIES

The West Pacific East Asia Oceanic Fisheries Management Project (WPEA-OFMP) was implemented from January 2010 to December 2013. The phase-2 of this project entitled Sustainable Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the West Pacific and East Asian Seas aims to strengthen national capacities and regional cooperation to implement fishery

sector reforms that will sustain and conserve the highly migratory fish stocks in the West Pacific Ocean and East Asian Seas while considering climatic variability and change started its activities in January 2015. This is being implemented in three (3) countries (Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam). This project focus on three (3) components, namely, i) strengthened regional governance and national adaptive capacity in management of highly migratory fish stocks moving amongst the Pacific Ocean Warm Pool Large Marine Ecosystem (POWPLME) and East Asian LMEs; ii) implementation of policy, institutional and fishery management reform; and iii) knowledge sharing on highly migratory shared fish stocks.

There is also a Joint Program for Tuna Research in Sulu-Sulawesi Sea initiated by SEAFDEC. The overall goal for this joint research program is to understand the status and trends of tuna fisheries in Sulu-Sulawesi Sea through collaborative research activities to be implemented by the three (3) SEAFDEC member countries surrounding the Sulu-Sulawesi Sea, namely, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. The joint research program will focus on three (3) target species, namely: yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*), and skipjack (*Katsuwonus pelamis*). The main activities under this joint research program would include:

- i. Review of catch and effort, biological data on tuna harvested in Sulu-Sulawesi Sea;
- ii. Actual data collection (tissue samples for genetic analysis; catch-effort and biological data; and fishing ground profiling using MV SEAFDEC2);
- iii. Tuna Stock Assessment
- iv. Determination of tuna fishing grounds;
- v. Assessment of the use of FADs in tuna fisheries in Sulu-Sulawesi Sea;
- vi. Organization of scientific committee meeting.

The 11<sup>th</sup> WCPFC Regular Session in December 2014 has adopted Conservation and Management Measure for Bigeye, Yellowfin and Skipjack Tuna in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (CMM 2013-01). Philippines has approved and implemented its own Fisheries Administrative Order No. 245-3 (FAO 245-3) on the Regulations and Implementing Guidelines on Group Tuna Purse Seine Operations in High Seas Pocket Number 1 as a Special Management Area. This is supported by other FAOs such as the National Tuna Fish Aggregating Device (FAD) Management Policy (FAO No. 244), FAO 236-4: Extension of FAO 236 series of 2010 or the Rules and Regulations on the Operations of Purse Seine and Ring Net Vessels Using Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) locally known as *Payaos* during the FAD Closure Period, and other FAOs which have been approved and implemented. These DA-BFAR Fisheries Administrative Orders will make sure that conservation and management objectives on CMM 2014-01 will not be compromised.

Philippines has recently passed Republic Act 10654 “An act to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, amending Republic Act 8550, otherwise known as “ The Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998”, and for other purpose. Implementing Rules and Regulations for this new law is expected to be completed within 6-months (September 2015).

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Attachment 1. Transshipment Details as Required in CMM 2009-06 Annex II.

ANNEX II

**AT SEA TRANSHIPMENT REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2014  
PHILIPPINES**

**Number 1 (Total Quantities, by weight, of highly migratory fish stocks transhipped by F/V of CCM)**

SPECIES	TOTAL QTY (WEIGHT) Kg.	PRODUCT FORM	FISHING GEAR	OFFLOADED/ RECEIVED	TRANSHIPPED					CAUGHT	
					PORT	AT SEA IN AREAS OF	BEYOND AREAS OF	INSIDE THE	OUTSIDE THE	INSIDE THE	OUTSIDE THE
BIGEYE	52,902	FR	LL	OFFLOADED			✓	✓		✓	
YELLOWFIN	2,781	FR	LL	OFFLOADED			✓	✓		✓	
ALBACORE	1,162	FR	LL	OFFLOADED			✓	✓		✓	
OTHERS	38,673	FR	LL	OFFLOADED			✓	✓		✓	
<b>Total</b>	<b>95,518</b>										

**Number 2 (Total number of transshipment involving highly migratory fish stocks by F/V of CCM)**

a. Offloaded	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Received	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Transhipped in:	port <input type="checkbox"/>	at sea in areas of national jurisdiction	<input type="checkbox"/>
		beyond areas of national jurisdiction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Transhipped:	inside the the Convention Area	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	outside the Convention Area
	inside the the Convention Area	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	outside the Convention Area
d. Caught:			
e. Fishing Gear:	Longline		
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF TRANSHIPMENT FOR JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2014.</b>			
*1 Boats / 2 times transshipment at sea"			