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PURSE SEINE FISHING ACTIVITY IN PNA WATERS

WCPFC12-2015-DP22
24 November 2015

Paper by PNA Members and Tokelau

A version of this paper was submitted to SC11 (ST-IP-04) and TCC11 (DP03)



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24 November 2015

Mr. Feleti Teo
Executive Director
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
PO Box 2356, Kolonia, Pohnpei
Federated States of Micronesia

Dear Feleti,

Re: Information Paper on Purse Seine Activity in PNA Waters

I write in my capacity as the Chair of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement on behalf of the 8 members of the PNA, and Tokelau.

Please find attached an information paper prepared by PNA members and Tokelau, to provide information on purse seine activity in PNA waters since 2010.

We hope it assists in improving the general understanding of the PS fishery in PNA waters and the tropical WCPO and how they relate to bigeye tuna. We hope it also provides a good indicator of the performance of the PNA purse seine VDS and other purse seine management processes in the WCPO.

Yours Sincerely,

Eugene Pangelinan (Mr.)

Chair, Parties to the Nauru Agreement

PURSE SEINE FISHING ACTIVITY IN PNA¹ WATERS

WCPFC12-2015-DPXX

Paper by PNA and Tokelau

Introduction

This paper provides information on purse seine activity in the waters of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA), and in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) outside PNA waters, for the period 2010 to 2014, including 2015 for vessel numbers.

The purposes of the work are:

- a) to improve understanding of the purse seine fishery in PNA waters, and the tropical WCPO more generally; and
- b) to provide indicators of the performance of the PNA purse seine Vessel Day Scheme (VDS) and other purse seine management processes in the WCPO.

The period for the analysis is from 2010. An overall hard limit on fishing effort under the VDS was applied from 2012 in accordance with CMM 2011-01, limiting effort in PNA EEZs to the 2010 level.

The purse seine fishery in PNA waters has accounted for around 80% of the WCPO purse seine catch from 2010-2014, the balance being taken in the waters of other Commission Members, especially Indonesia and the Philippines, and the high seas.

Vessel Numbers in PNA Waters

Figure 1 below and Table 1 show the number of vessels on the PNA purse seine VDS register since 2010. Overall, there has been little change in the size of the fleets operating in PNA waters, which have ranged between 266 and 285 vessels annually over this period. Of the 278 vessels that have operated in 2015, as indicated in Table 1, six (6) have been decommissioned and others are known to be no longer operating in PNA waters.

¹ Parties to the Nauru Agreement plus Tokelau

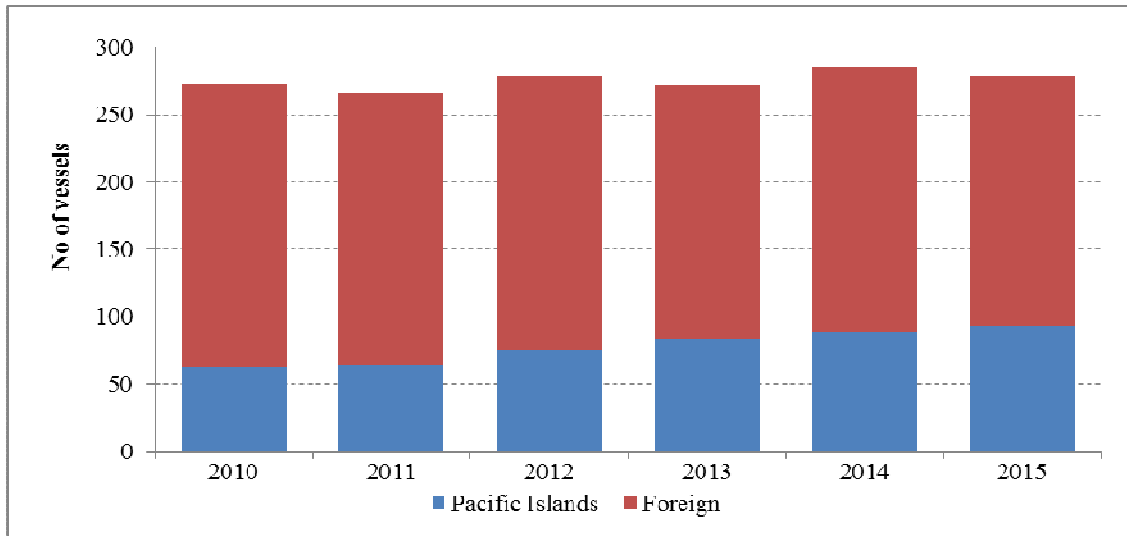


Figure 1: Annual number of vessels operating in PNA waters.

(Pacific Islands include foreign flag vessels operating under the FSM Arrangement; the 2015 figure is the number of vessels registered as at Sept 2015. Source: PNA VDS Register)

Purse Seine Fishing Effort in PNA Waters

Figure 2 below and Table 2 show the estimated purse seine fishing effort in PNA waters since 2010, based on logsheets. The data for 2014 is provisional. PNA Members are implementing electronic catch and effort reporting that will improve the timeliness of effort data. As illustrated by the graph, the logsheet data indicates that 2014 effort was slightly down from 2013.

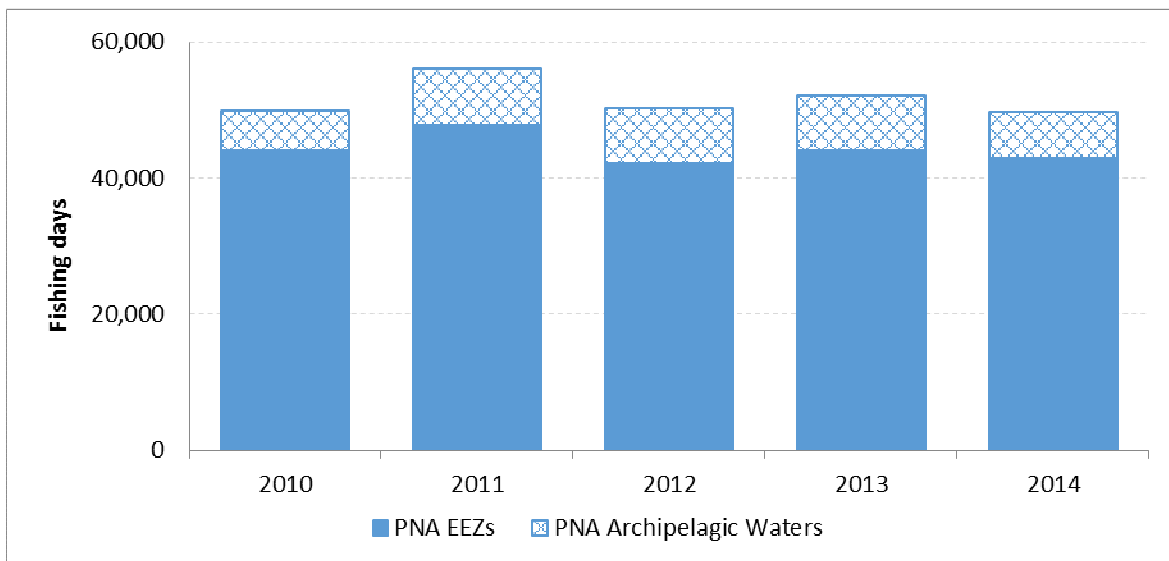


Figure 2: Purse seine effort (fishing days) in PNA waters. (Source: SPC data as at 14 Oct 2015)

Purse Seine Catch in PNA Waters

Figure 3 below and Table 3 show the estimated purse seine fishing catch in PNA waters since 2010, based on logsheets. The data for 2014 is provisional. PNA Members are implementing electronic catch and effort reporting that will improve the timeliness of catch data.

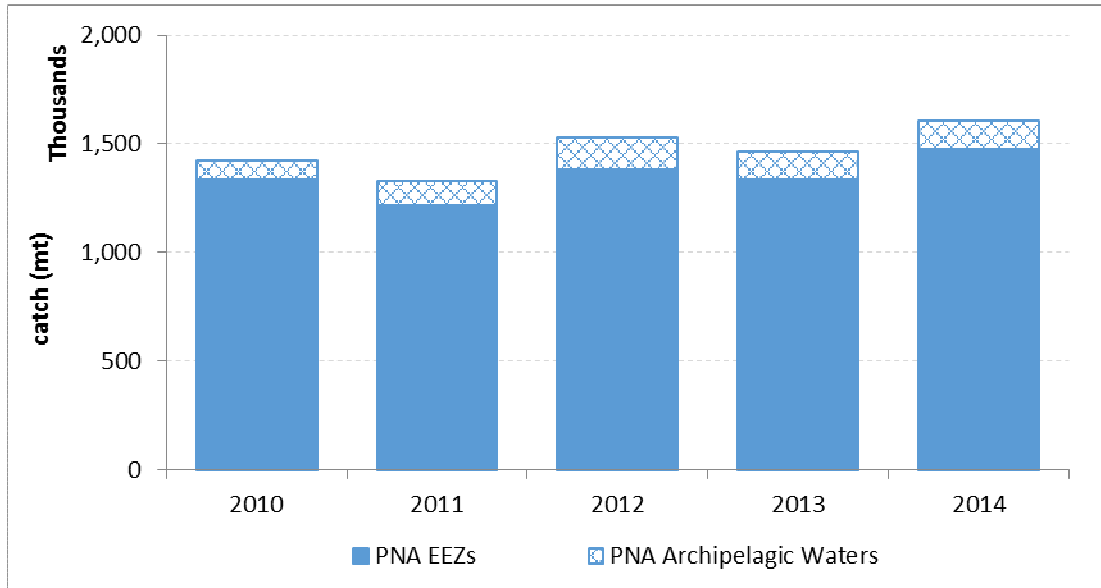


Figure 3: Purse seine catch (mt) in PNA waters. (Source: SPC data as at 14 Oct 2015)

Purse Seine Catch Rate in PNA Waters

Figure 4 shows the nominal purse seine catch rate per fishing day in PNA waters from the previous effort and catch above. In general, catch rates have been around 30 tonnes per day over this period apart from the dip in 2011. There was a 15.2% increase in 2014 from 2013, which appears to have been largely due to an increase in free school catch rates. Catch rates in archipelagic waters (AWs) have been lower than catch rates in the PNA EEZs.

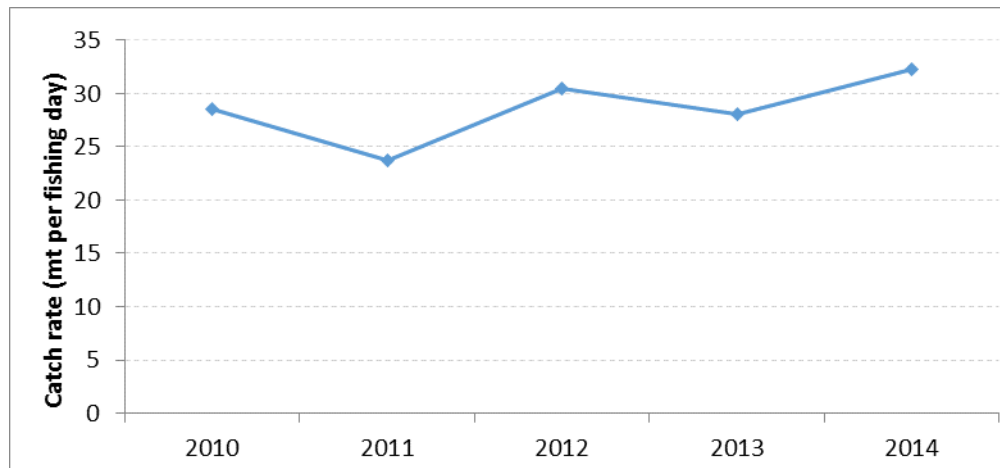


Figure 4: Catch rate (mt per fishing day) in PNA waters. (Source: SPC data as at 14 Oct 2015)

WCPO Purse Seine Effort² and Catch, Outside PNA Waters

Figure 5 below and Table 4 show the estimated purse seine fishing effort and catch in the WCPO outside PNA waters since 2010, based on similar sources to the data for PNA waters shown above.

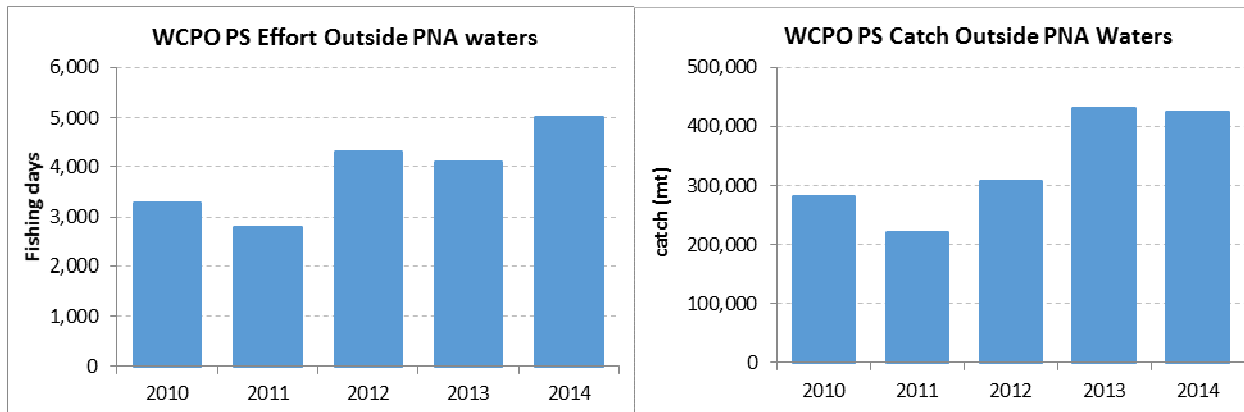


Figure 5: WCPO purse seine effort and catch, outside PNA waters.

(Effort excludes fishing in waters of Indonesia and Philippines, and by Philippine vessels under the Special Arrangement in HSP-1. Source: SPC data as at 14 Oct 2015)

Purse Seine Bigeye Catch in PNA Waters

The purse seine bigeye catch shown in Figure 6 below and in Table 5 constitutes 3 - 5% of the total purse seine catch in PNA waters.

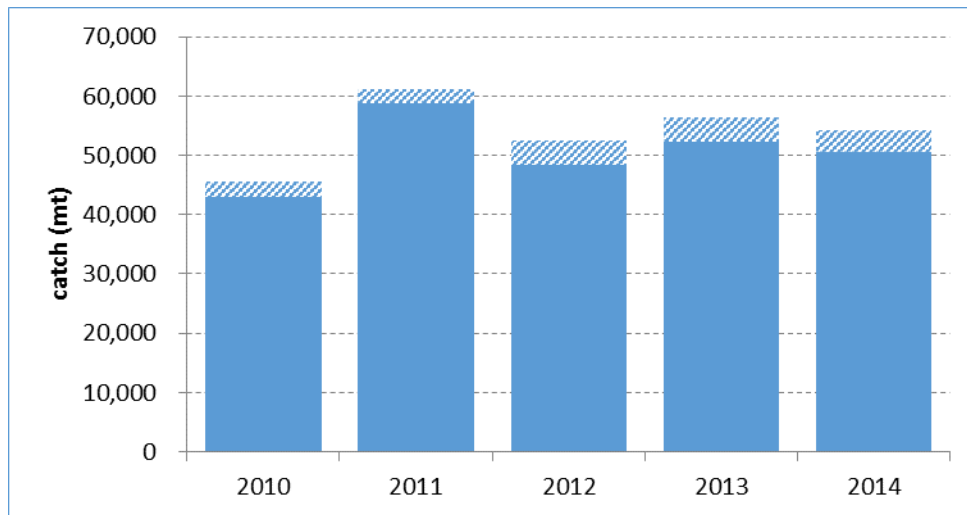


Figure 6: Purse seine bigeye catch (mt) in PNA waters (Source: SPC data as at 14 Oct 2015)

²Excludes fishing in Indonesia and Philippines

Purse Seine Bigeye Catch outside PNA waters

The purse seine bigeye catch outside PNA waters, shown in Figure 7 below and in Table 5, includes catch in the high seas and in other national waters. The catch in the high seas constituted over 60% of the bigeye catch outside PNA waters in 2014.

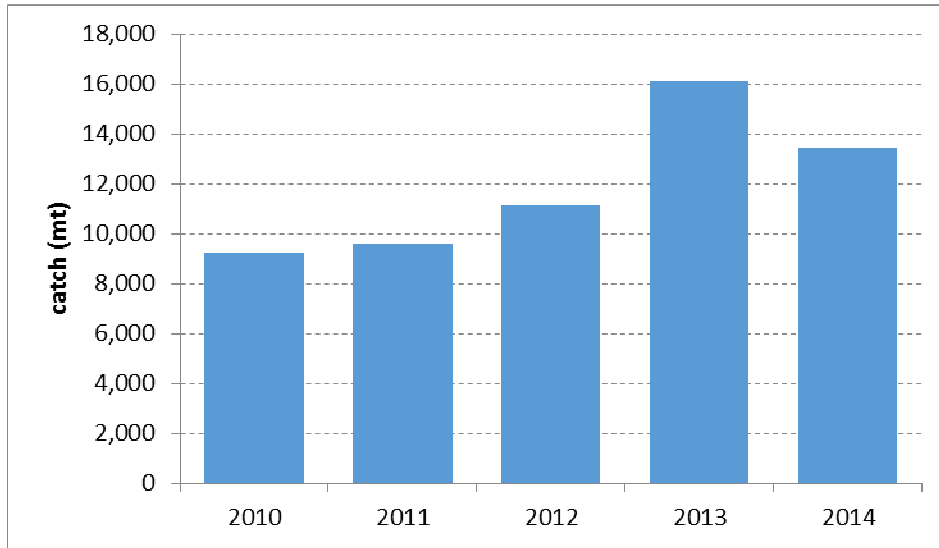


Figure 7: Purse seine bigeye catch (mt) outside PNA waters (Source: SPC data as at 14 Oct 2015)

Table 1: No of vessels operating in PNA EEZs for the period 2010 to 2015

(The Pacific Islands fleet includes foreign flag vessels operating under the FSM Arrangement; the 2015 figure includes six (6) vessels that have been decommissioned as at September, and other vessels no longer operating in PNA waters. (Source: PNA VDS Register).

| Fleet | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Pacific Islands | 62 | 64 | 75 | 83 | 88 | 93 |
| Foreign | 211 | 202 | 204 | 189 | 197 | 185 |
| Total | 273 | 266 | 279 | 272 | 285 | 278 |

Table 2: Purse seine effort (logsheet days) in PNA waters. (Source: SPC data as at 14 Oct 2015)

| Effort in | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| PNA EEZs | 43,982 | 47,797 | 42,169 | 44,096 | 42,914 |
| PNA AWs | 5,825 | 8,199 | 8,082 | 7,985 | 6,790 |
| Total | 49,808 | 55,997 | 50,252 | 52,082 | 49,704 |

Table 3: Purse seine catch (mt) in PNA waters. (Source: SPC data as at 14 Oct 2015)

| Catch in | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| PNA EEZs | 1,336,812 | 1,215,127 | 1,379,903 | 1,335,356 | 1,474,632 |
| PNA AWs | 85,091 | 113,113 | 150,261 | 126,933 | 132,550 |
| Total | 1,421,904 | 1,328,240 | 1,530,164 | 1,462,289 | 1,607,182 |

Table 4: WCPO purse seine effort and catch, outside PNA waters

Note: Effort excludes fishing in waters of Indonesia and Philippines, and by Philippine vessels under the Special Arrangement in HSP-1. (Source: Same as Tables 2&3)

| | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| PS Effort (fishing days) | 3,282 | 2,782 | 4,316 | 4,110 | 5,816 |
| PS Catch (mt) | 280,867 | 221,036 | 306,821 | 432,432 | 425,543 |

Table 5: Purse seine bigeye catch in PNA and outside PNA waters (Source: Same as Tables 2 - 4)

| | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| PNA EEZs | 42,868 | 58,817 | 48,287 | 52,340 | 50,511 |
| PNA AWS | 2,811 | 2,360 | 4,122 | 3,999 | 3,736 |
| <i>Total PNA</i> | <i>45,679</i> | <i>61,177</i> | <i>52,410</i> | <i>56,339</i> | <i>54,247</i> |
| Outside PNA | 9,237 | 9,570 | 11,154 | 16,126 | 13,404 |
| Total WCPO | 54,917 | 70,747 | 63,563 | 72,465 | 67,651 |