

# SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE TWELFTH REGULAR SESSION

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

WCPFC-SC12-AR/CCM-26

**TUVALU** 



## FISHERIES DEPARTMENT

## Ministry of Natural Resources Government of Tuvalu



# ANNUAL REPORT TO THE WESTERN CENTRAL PACIFIC FISHERIES COMMISSION

# PART 1: INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

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 2016

YES

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#### 1.0 ABSTRACT

The current estimates of tuna total catches by Tuvalu flagged purse seine vessels and longline within the WCPFC Convention area were 5976mt in 2015. In comparison according to gear type there were 92% (5501mt) from national fleet purse seine vessels and 8% (475mt) from longline flagged vessels. By species composition in total, skipjack species has the highest of 90.3% (5399mt), yellowfin tuna of 4.6% (274mt), bigeye tuna of 3.1% (187mt) and other species of 0.3% (19mt).

There were six Tuvalu flagged vessels in the Commission RFV with four vessels active and were engaged fishing in the WCPO. The catch distribution for Tuvalu purse seine vessel occurred mostly in Kiribati EEZ outside Tuvalu waters while for longline flagged vessels mainly fishing in Tuvalu waters.

The artisanal data collection programme was an on-going pilot project for Tuvalu since 2013. This was successfully implemented throughout the past three years; however, in 2015 there was a decline in total catches of the main target species (BET, SKJ & YFT). These were due to missing of data forms transfer from the outer island to Funafuti for entry and analysis purposes.

The total numbers of fishing licenses were decreases from 285 in 2014 to 260 in 2015. These were due to dramatically decreasing in the number of longline from 43 to 26 and pole & line from 20 to 1. Additionally, the total catches for all gear type within Tuvalu EEZ in 2015 were 81655.41mt. By gear type composition the total catch for purse seine (79013.4mt) and longline (2642.41mt). This catches were fished in Tuvalu waters by foreign fishing companies including Tuvalu flagged vessels. The bilateral partners of Tuvalu are the Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Kiribati, and New Zealand while for multi-lateral partners including UST and FSMA.

The transshipment data for Tuvalu flagged vessels were increased from 7551.18mt in 2014 to 584208.1mt in 2015. Also, other significant increases of 80 numbers of transshipment in Funafuti port for 2015 compared to 2014 of 43. Majority of these transshipment activities purse seine which are licensed in Tuvalu waters. The Tuvalu Fisheries Observer program was 100% coverage on purse seine and no coverage on longline vessels. The Memorandum of Agreement between Tuvalu and Fiji was signed in 2015. The total numbers of Tuvalu observers were 34 in 2014 and increase to 52 observers in total in 2015.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND

In 2015 Tuvalu tuna fishery continuously consisted of two key commercial tuna fisheries: purse seine and longline. Most of fishing is undertaken by foreign vessels operating under access agreement. Tuvalu has not change its small domestic fishing fleet of one purse seiner and two longliner and three bunkers.

Taumoana mostly fishing in Kiribati EEZ while the two longliners (Pakasoa & Tuipuga) mainly fished in Tuvalu EEZ. There were six number of flagged vessel recorded and registered under the Commission RFV in 2015, while there were five are active fishing or fishing related activity in WCPO area.

Small scale fishing is very significant in Tuvalu (Artisanal Programme). There is a significant artisanal fishery operating out of each of the eight inhabited islands of Tuvalu.

#### 3.0 FLAG STATE REPORTING

#### 3.1 DOMESTIC FLEET

There were six flagged vessels authorized on the Commission RFV to fish in the Convention Area in 2015, of which five were active or engaged fishing/fishing related activity in the WCPO. Star Tuna is no longer operated or engaged in fishing or fishing related activity in 2015. Table 1a and 1b below shows the number of purse seine and longline flagged vessels in according to size category.

Table 1a: Number of Tuvalu purse seine flagged vessels and size category, active in the WCPFC Convention Area for 2011-2015. Source: TUFMAN 1

Year	00-500 GRT	501-1000 GRT	1001-1500 GRT	1500+ GRT	Total Vessels
2011	0	0	0	1	1
2012	0	0	0	1	1
2013	0	0	0	1	1
2014	0	0	0	1	1
2015	0	0	0	1	1

Table 1b: Number of Tuvalu longline flagged vessels and size category, active in the WCPFC Convention Area for 2011 – 2015. Source: TUFMAN 1

Year	00-50 GRT	51-200 GRT	201-500 GRT	500+ GRT	Total Vessels
2011	0	2	0	4	6
2012	0	2	0	4	6

2013	0	0	0	2	2
2014	0	0	0	2	2
2015	0	2	0	0	2

#### 3.2 CATCH AND EFFORT DATA

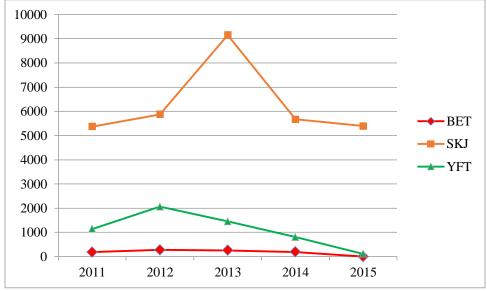
#### 3.2.1 Purse seine

In 2015, Tuvalu purse seine vessels estimated a total catch of (5502mt) in the Convention area as shown in Table 2. Approximately 98% (5393mt) of the total purse seine catch within the WCPFC Convention Area was skipjack and 1.9% (108mt) yellowfin tuna. However, in 2015 the catch data shows from the database web reporting and was very low or can be the vessels simply did not reported any of this, so it was useful to consider using observer estimated catch by species. According to observer catch estimated the bigeye tuna has the lowest of 1.3% in total, while skipjack was 94% and 4.9% for yellowfin tuna, the bigeye component never exceeded 3% of the catch.

Table 2: Annual raised catch estimates (MT) for Tuvalu Purse seine fleet, in the WCPFC Convention area (2011 - 2015). \*Observer estimate catch data.

Year	BET	SKJ	YFT	TOTAL
2011	182	5371	1143	6696
2012	277	5877	2063	8217
2013	256	9156	1453	10865
2014	189	5669	805	6663
2015*	59	4304	223	4586

Figure 1: Chart of annual catches target species for Tuvalu Purse seiner for the WCPFC Convention Area over the past 5 years. Source: TUFMAN 2



As demonstrate in Figure 1 that the trend of skipjack species was the highest of 98% in 2013 with a total catch (9156mt) then slightly decreasing from 85% to 84% in 2014 to 2015 respectively.

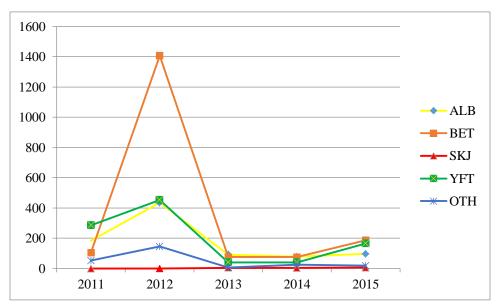
### 3.2.2 Longline

The total catch of all species in Tuvalu longline flagged vessels in 2015 was reported to be 475mt (Table 3). Significantly increased in bigeye and yellowfin tuna in 2015 resulted in increased of the tuna catches in total.

Table 3: Annual raised catch estimates (mt) for the Tuvalu Longline fleet, in the WCPFC Convention Area. (Source: TUFMAN 2)

Year	ALB	BET	SKJ	YFT	BLM	<b>BUM</b>	MLS	SWO	TOTAL
2011	184	105	0	286	2	39	1	10	627
2012	435	1008	0	453	1	102	5	38	2042
2013	92	76	5	41	2	4	0	1	221
2014	78	76	4	41	8	14	0	3	224
2015	97	187	6	166	2	11	0	6	475

Figure 2: Shows a graph of longline catch volume for the three main species over the past 5 years (2011 - 2015). Source: TUFMAN 2



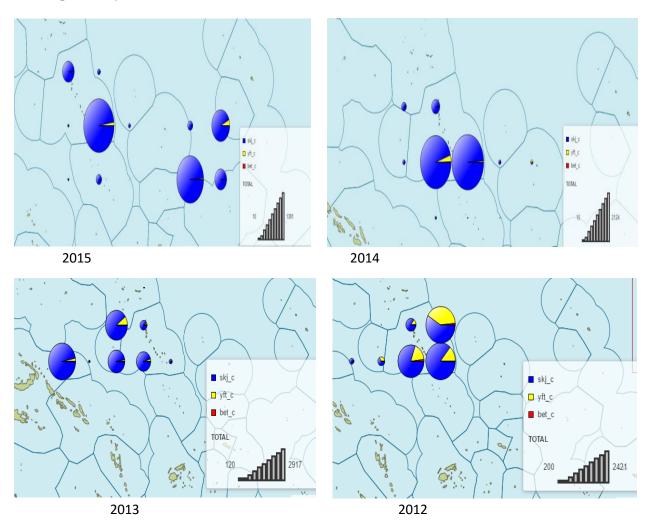
The significant increases in bigeye catch from 34% (76mt) in 2014 to 39.4% (187mt) in 2015. The highest catches were bigeye tuna of 39.4% (187mt), yellowfin tuna of 35% (166mt) and albacore of 20.4% (97mt) (Figure 2).

### 3.3 FISHING PATTERN AND DISTRIBUTION

### 3.3.1 CATCH AND EFFORT DISTRIBUTION FOR PURSE SEINERS

In 2015, the distribution of the fishing catch for tuna species were moved towards north of Tuvalu EEZ and Kiribati EEZ. Most of the purse seine fishing effort and catch were done outside Tuvalu EEZ (Figure 3a & 3b).

Figure 3a: Catch distribution of tuna species for the Purse seine national fleet within the WCPO area in 2015 and the past four years. (Source - DORADO - Web based - TUFMAN 2)



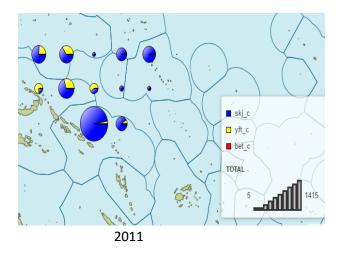
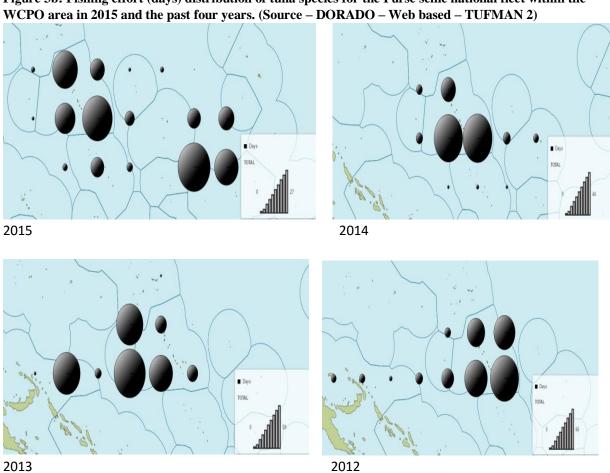
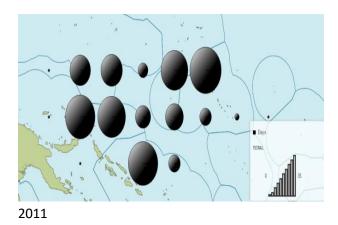


Figure 3b: Fishing effort (days) distribution of tuna species for the Purse seine national fleet within the

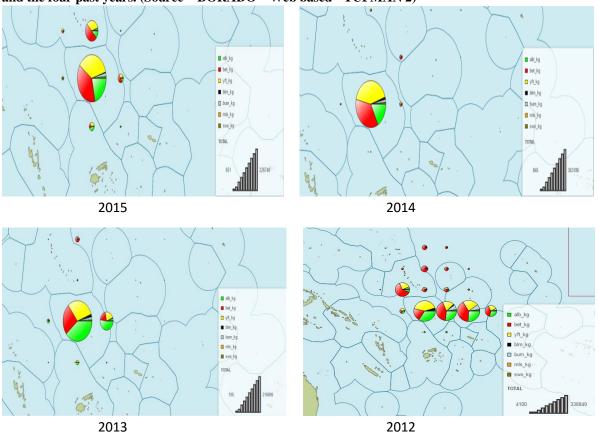




# 3.3.2 LONGLINE

In 2015, most of the Tuvalu flagged longline fleet had the fishing took place within Tuvalu waters. Their main fishing effort and catches took place in the central and north of Tuvalu EEZ. Only few were fished in Kiribati EEZ (Figure 4a & 4b).

Figure 4a: Fishing catch distribution of longline flagged vessels within the WCPFC Convention area in 2015 and the four past years. (Source - DORADO - Web based - TUFMAN 2)



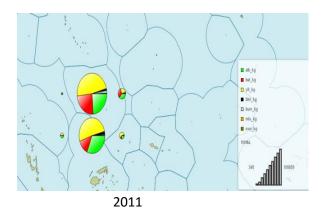
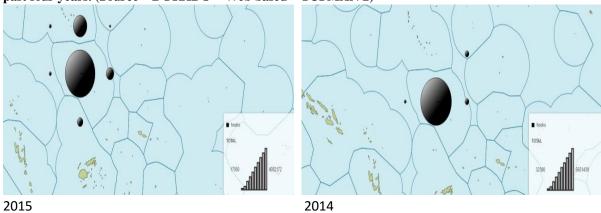
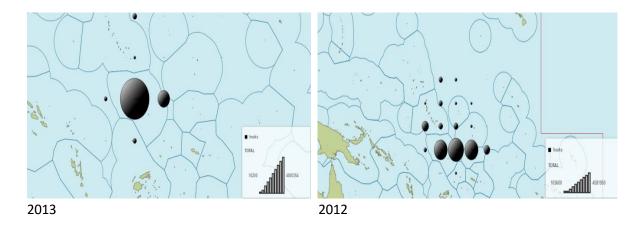
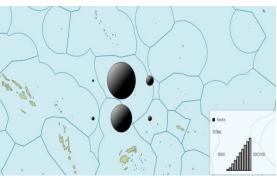


Figure 4b: Fishing effort (days) distribution of longline national fleet within the WCPO area in 2015 and the past four years. (Source - DORADO - Web based - TUFMAN 2)







#### 3.3.3 ARTISANAL FISHERIES

The small scale artisanal tuna data collection programme is still an ongoing project in which funded under Japanese Trust fund through SPC and has been implemented in Tuvalu & Nauru only as a Pilot project since 2013. This small scale fishery was operated in 8 Tuvalu islands. Data are collected by data collector in which stationed in each island and the data forms were transferred to Funafuti (Capital) for entry and analysis.

These main target species were bigeye, yellowfin and skipjack tuna and were essentially by hand trolling. The total catches of the catches were 101.55t consisted of the highest catch of skipjack tuna of 52.7% (53.53t), 35.5% (36t) yellowfin tuna, 5.09% (5.17t) bigeye tuna and others species of 6.8% (6.8t) (Table 4). The significant decline in catches was due to the missing of data forms from outer island to Funafuti.

Table 4: Annual catches (tonnes) landed by artisanal fishermen. Source: TUFMAN

YEAR	BET	SKJ	YFT	OTH	TOTAL
2013	5.21	69.68	20.20	19.77	114.86
2014	8.91	162.6	55.41	20.65	247.57
2015	5.17	53.53	36	6.85	101.55

#### 3.4 SPECIES OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Based on the data available, there were no catches of species of special interest (SSI). No catches of SSI reported by observers on Tuvalu flagged vessels.

#### 3.5 NON TARGET ASSOCIATED OR DEPENDENT SPECIES

In Table 5 shows the annual catch estimates for non-target species caught by Tuvalu flagged vessels. In 2015 the total of non-target species was 1.43mt for purse seine and 20.64mt for longline vessels. Obviously, there were high catch estimates for non-target species in longline than in purse seine vessels. These changes might due to the type of fishing method used.

Table 5: Annual raised catch estimates (mt) of non-target, associated or dependent species for Tuvalu flagged vessels in the WCPFC Convention Area. Source: TUFMAN 2

YEAR	BUM	BLM	MLS	SWO	FAL	OCS		
Purse seine								
2011	0	3.67	0	0	2.14	0		
2012	0	6.94	0	0.05	0.32	0		
2013	0	4.35	0	0	0.14	0		

2014	0	0	0	0	0.03	0
2015	1.1	0.1	0.2	0	0.03	0
Longline						
2011	3.62	5.99	0.2	1.053	0	0.06
2012	105.16	21.17	5.164	38.36	0	0.03
2013	13.64	9.545	0.26	6.064	0	0
2014	13.67	8.27	0.24	9.46	0	0
2015	11.91	2.54	0	6.19	0	0

#### 4.0 COASTAL STATE REPORTING

#### **4.1 FISHING LICENSES**

All commercial and foreign fishing vessels are licensed to fish in Tuvalu waters are issued and administered by the Government of Tuvalu through the Fisheries Department.

Artisanal fishing does not require a commercial fishing license, but may be subject to the local business requirements of each island council.

In Table 6 shows the number of licenses issued by gear type, as well as for support vessels (fish carrier and bunkers). The most numerous licensing category is for purse seine whereas the main operators from multi-lateral arrangement - the FSM Arrangement (76 vessels) and US Treaty (39 vessels), with the remaining being licensed on a bilateral basis. Most of this bi- laterally licensed purse seiners are from Korea, Taiwan, Japan and longline licensed from Fiji.

The total number of licenses were decreases from 285 to 260 from 2014 to 2015 respectively, this might be due to the dramatically decline in number license for pole & line from 20 to and the number of longline from 43 to 30.

Table 6: Number of licenses issued for the Tuvalu EEZ, by flag and gear type from 2011-2015. Source: TUFMAN 2

Year	Longline	Purse seine	Pole & line	Fish Carrier	Bunker	TOTAL
2010	135	158	17	6	4	320
2011	96	125	5	0	4	230
2012	108	100	5	18	2	233
2013	33	146	16	7	3	205
2014	43	187	20	29	6	285
2015	30	189	1	33	7	260

In most cases licenses are issued on annual basis except for longline applied for 6 months only. This can also occasionally lead to situation in which one vessel may operate under two licenses in a given year. In the case of pole and line vessels the licenses are issued on a per trip basis.

Figure 3 shows a breakdown of vessels licensed to operate in Tuvalu waters both bilateral and multilateral arrangement. The highest number of vessels and licenses for purse seine are UST, and then follow by the Korea and Taiwan flagged vessels. However, Korea flagged vessels were also the huge number of licenses for fish carrier in 2015.

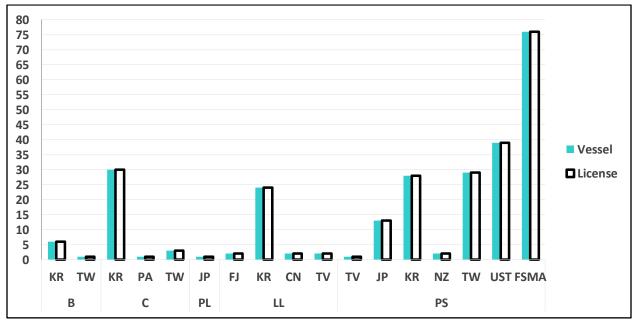


Figure 5: Annual number of fishing vessel licenses by nationality and gear in 2015. Source: TUFMAN 1

#### **4.2 CATCHES IN TUVALU EEZ**

In 2015 licensed fishing vessels operating under bilateral and multi-lateral arrangements caught a total of 81,655.51mt tuna species in the Tuvalu EEZ. This catches was mainly from purse seine and longline fleets that was fished in Tuvalu EEZ.

In table 7 shows the total catch of 79013.1mt tuna species from purse seine fleets. The highest catch in Tuvalu EEZ in 2015 were from US vessels of 58.31% (46073.4mt) of the total catches, follow by the Korea flagged vessels of 17.89% (14135.9mt), then FSMA and Taiwan flagged vessels of 9.32% (7362.15mt) and 8.36% (6608.03mt) respectively. FSMA has the highest number of license issued to fish in Tuvalu waters (Fig 5) however, due to no catch data available

on Dorado reporting for Philippines and Vanuatu flagged vessels resulted in decline in FSMA catch data.

By species composition skipjack is the highest catch of 96.09% (75920.8mt) of the total catch compared to yellowfin and bigeye tuna of 3.28% (2590.81mt) and 0.63% (501.48mt) correspondingly.

Table 7: Purse seine raised catch estimates in Tuvalu EEZ by gear and species in 2015. \*FSMA catch – No catch data available for Philippines & Vanuatu flagged vessels. Source: TUFMAN 2

SPECIES	BET	SKJ	YFT	TOTAL
FLAG				
CN	5	285	25	315
JP	4	660.6	6	670.6
KI	43.6	2234	69.5	2347.1
KR	71.19	13646.2	418.5	14135.9
NZ	4.49	1016.9	29.39	1050.78
TW	84.02	6234.49	289.52	6608.03
TV	0	443.2	7	450.2
FSMA*	111.25	6867.66	383.24	7362.15
UST	177.93	44532.8	1362.66	46073.4
	501.48	75920.8	2590.81	79013.1

The total catches of tuna species from longline fleets were 2642.41mt. The highest catch for longline was from Korean vessels of 57% (1521.64mt) of the total catch (Table 8). By species composition the highest catch were yellowfin tuna of 935.25mt, albacore (876.406mt and bigeye tuna of 830.75mt.

Table 8: Longline raised catch estimates in Tuvalu EEZ, by gear and species in 2015. Source: TUFMAN 2

SPECIES	ALB	BET	YFT	TOTAL
FLAG				
CN	166.6	36.21	104.36	307.17
FJ	106.69	140.41	133.1	380.2
KR	508.05	475.34	538.25	1521.64
TV	95.066	178.789	159.54	433.39
	876.406	830.749	935.25	2642.41

#### **5.0 SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS**

Fishery access agreement provides a critical source of revenue for the Tuvalu Government. The revenues were increased from US\$18 million to US\$26 million from 2014 to 2015 respectively.

This were due to the increased in numbers of license applied and mainly the increased in vessel days to fish in Tuvalu waters.

#### **6.0 DISPOSAL OF CATCH**

Tuvalu flag vessels have been offloaded their catches at ports outside Tuvalu. Taumoana has been offloaded most of its catch in Majuro, whilst the other two Tuvalu flagged longline vessels offloaded all catches in Suva port.

Enforcement in port Funafuti has been tightened up due to disposal of undersize and gear damaged tuna in the lagoon of Funafuti the designated port of Tuvalu where all transhipment occurred. All transhipments will be now monitored for compliance with all national laws including laws on right and correct manner of disposing undersize and damaged fish in port.

#### 7.0 ONSHORE DEVELOPMENTS

Tuvalu has no commercial onshore fish processing or marketing facilities. Attempting to establish this development in the previous years was unsuccessfully due to high costs, logistically difficulties, absence of fresh water and other diseconomies of isolation.

## 8.0 FUTURE PROSPECTS OF THE FISHERY

In 2015, changes in weather patterns such as the El nino is no doubt have been contributed constructively to the favorable distribution of Tuna fisheries in the central WCPO where Tuvalu EEZ is located. This as a result has increased the fishing effort in our EEZ, hence increasing the number of catch and revenues generated from Licensing under the VDs in Tuvalu's waters. It is anticipated that in 2016 El nino will become weaker and as such may shift the effort of fishing to the Northern and western part of WCPO which might result in less favorable and attractive of Tuvalu's EEZ for fishing in 2016.

#### 9.0 STATUS OF TUNA FISHERY DATA COLLECTION SYSTEMS

#### a) Logsheet data collection and verification

Submission of catch logsheets at the end of each trip to Fisheries department from both foreign and domestic flagged vessels is an obligation under Tuvalu national laws. The logsheets has to submitted 14 days after completion of every trip either by airmail or electronic. It is still a problem always faced by the department in late submission and top of that is a demanding asking to send the missing logsheets. Table below shows below was the information on the extent of annual coverage of operational catch/effort; port sampling and observer data for Tuvalu national fishing fleets (Table 8).

The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between Fiji and Tuvalu was already signed in 2015. This is to ensure a minimum of 5% observer coverage on Tuvalu flagged longline vessels.

Table 9: Estimated annual coverage of operational catch/effort, port sampling and observer data for the Tuvalu national fleet in 2015

Data type	Purse seine coverage rate (%)	Longline coverage rate (%)
Logsheets	96.5	77.8
Observer	100	0
Port Sampling	N/A	N/A

### b) Observer programme

Due to the increase in demand for Tuvalu observers by our bilateral, the Observer program decided to recruit 18 new observers increasing the number from 34 in 2014 to 52 observers in 2015. In 2015, Tuvalu observers were mostly placed onboard Korean purse seine vessels through national program and some were employed under regional program such as PNA and FFA observer program. The total number of trips made in 2015 was 191 with approximately about 4880 sea days as shown in table below. Please note that all placements were made on purse seine vessels only with none made on longline vessels (Table 9). There were 100% observer coverage on purse seine vessels and there was none in longline vessels. However, the MOA has been already signed between the Government of Fiji and Tuvalu.

Table 10: Observer trips in 2015 by observer program

Arrangement	Trips	Sea days	
	Purse seine	Purse seine	
Tuvalu Observer program	148	3689	
PNA	38	1057	
FFA	5	134	
TOTAL	191	4880	

Tuvalu observer program is still facing the problem of lacking of certify debriefers. The program has now up to 52 observers with only one certify debriefer and 5 trainee debriefers waiting to be certified. Trainings to certify the 5 trainee debriefers will be a priority for 2016 as SPC trainers are not available to run a national training in 2015.

#### c) Transshipment data collection

The transshipment data for all Tuvalu flagged vessels were increases from 7551.18mt to 584208.1mt in 2014 to 2015 correspondingly. Also, an increase in total number of transshipment from 43 to 80 that was took place in Funafuti port in 2014 to 2015. The total transshipment data in port in 2015 has a total of 163, 679.65mt (Appendix 1). This purse seine has engaged the transshipment is licenses in Tuvalu waters. However, the Tuvalu longline flagged vessel are offloaded the catches in Suva, Fiji while the Taumoana offloaded the catches in Majuro. In 2015, there were quite big number of observers are placed on board during transshipment for monitoring purposes and collect data on total catch that being transshipped to fish carriers.

#### 10.0 CMM REPORTING

CMM REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSE
CMM 2005-03	North Pacific Albacore	Total catch of 0.02mt of NPA was caught
		by the 2 Tuvalu flagged LL vessels
CMM 2006-04	South West Stripped	There is one vessel recorded and no
	Marlin	striped marlin catches
CMM 2009 -03	Swordfish	There is no SWO were caught in the
		Convention Area South of 20°S
CMM 2009-06	Transhipment	Total transhipment data in 2015 for
		Tuvalu flagged vessels were 584208.1mt.
		There were 80 number of purse seine has
		been engaged in the transhipment in
		Funafuti port with the total of tuna species
		of 163,679.65mt. See Appendix 1 for
		detail of transhipment data reported under
		this CMM
CMM 2010 – 05	South Pacific Albacore	No Tuvalu flag vessel fish in area South
		20° South of Convention Area
CMM 2010-07	Sharks	Key sharks species was reported &

		discarded of 44 silky shark, 1 discarded blacktips sharks
CMM 2011-03	Cetaceans	There is no data recorded
CMM 2011-04	Oceanic whitetip sharks	There is no data on Oceanic white tip sharks has been recorded both from Tufman and observer reports
CMM 2012 -04	Whale sharks	There is no report on an event that a whale shark encircled in the purse seine net
CMM 2012 – 07	Seabirds	There is no report on the interaction with seabirds by observers
CMM 2013 – 01	Discard reporting	All are skipjack species was discarded this is due to gear damage and few of them are too small in size
CMM 2013- 08	Silky sharks	There were 44 silky sharks were discarded altogether, 7 DPD, 4 DPU & majority 33 (DUS) according to the observer report on Tuvalu flagged purse seine vessel
Observer coverage		The observer coverage on purse seine vessels were 100% and no coverage on longline vessels. Details on this is in the Part 1 report under the Status of Tuna fishery data collection systems
CDS & Mass		Not applicable
Balance		
Reconciliation Trial		

APPENDIX 1: TRANSHIPMENT DATA FOR TUVALU FLAGGED VESSELS & IN PORT FOR 2015

VESSEL NAMES	GEAR TYPE	ALB	ВЕТ	YFT	SKJ	SWO	ОТН	TOTAL TRANSFERRED	PORT OF TRANSHIPMENT	AREA FISH CAUG-HT	PRODUCTS FORM
PAKASOA	LL	72386.3	77777.4	76519		3154.4	25744	255581.1	SUVA, FIJI	TV/HS	FROZEN
TUIPUGA	LL	44394	134127	123036		5011	16569	323137	SUVA, FIJI	TV/HS	FROZEN
TAUMOANA	PS			85	5405			5490	MAJURO	KI/TV/HS	FROZEN
								584208.1			

<sup>•</sup> Offload/Transshipment data for TV flagged vessels = 584208.1mt

FLAG	NO. OF	SKIPJACK	YELLOWFIN	BIGEYE	MIXED	TRANSHIPPED	CAUGHT	PRODUCT	GEAR
	VESSELS	(MT)	(MT)	(MT)	(MT)	IN-PORT	IN WCP-CA	FORM	
SOUTH	24	57,681	6,931	258	-	YES	YES	FROZEN	PURSE
KOREA								WHOLE	SEINE
USA	11	17,514	902.1	156	-	YES	YES	FROZEN	PURSE
								WHOLE	SEINE
PNG	21	36,974.9	2,569.55	371.1	-	YES	YES	FROZEN	PURSE
								WHOLE	SEINE
KIRIBATI	9	13,022	2,532	78	2,363	YES	YES	FROZEN	PURSE
								WHOLE	SEINE
TAIWAN	6	10,505	406.1	137.9	-	YES	YES	FROZEN	PURSE
								WHOLE	SEINE
FSM	4	4,735	455	-	-	YES	YES	FROZEN	PURSE
								WHOLE	SEINE
RMI	4	3,790	21	31	-	YES	YES	FROZEN	PURSE
								WHOLE	SEINE
CHINA	1	2,180	61	5	-	YES	YES	FROZEN	PURSE
								WHOLE	SEINE
TO	ΓAL	146,401.9	13,877.75	1,037	2,363			·	

<sup>■</sup> Transshipment data in port overall Total – 163, 679.65mt