



**NORTHERN COMMITTEE**  
**TWELFTH REGULAR SESSION**  
Fukuoka, Japan  
29 August – 2 September 2016

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**Report on CMM 2015-04 (Pacific bluefin tuna)**

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**WCPFC-NC12-2016/DP-05**

**JAPAN**



**FISHERIES AGENCY**

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES, GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN**

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July 29, 2016

Feleti P. Teo  
Executive Director  
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission  
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Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, 96941

Dear Mr. Teo,

In accordance with paragraph 12 of the conservation and management measure for Pacific bluefin tuna (CMM2015-04), Japan submits a report explaining measures and actions it has introduced and been implementing for Pacific bluefin tuna (PBF).

Sincerely yours,

for Shingo OTA

Japanese Commissioner to WCPFC

## I. Overview of Japanese PBF Fisheries

Japan caught 12,897 tons of PBF on an annual average basis between 2002 and 2004, which is the reference year of CMM 2015-04. Almost all PBF catches 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 fisheries on average in 2002-2004 were as follows; purse seine: 7,644 tons, troll: 2,371 tons, set net: 945 tons, longline: 1,317 tons, and other fisheries: 622 tons.

The characteristics of these fisheries are as follows;

(1) **Purse seine** is 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 is caught only during its migration season in the following three fishing grounds:

- (i) Western Japan ground: 0-1 year old fish are caught by 21 vessels.
- (ii) Sea of Japan ground: mainly adult fish are caught by 19 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 fishery 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.

(3) **Set net** is managed through the licensing system by the governors of prefectures. The catch of set nets fluctuates substantially year by year but has not increased in the long run. The number of set net licensed is approximately 1,800.

(4) **Longline** is managed under the licensing system by the Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The main target species of longline are bigeye, yellowfin, and albacore. PBF catches by about 536 vessels are seasonal and require a different configuration of the fishing gear. The catch has decreased in recent years.

(5) Most of **other fisheries** are managed through the ministerial licensing systems, and their catch fluctuates but has not increased in the long run.

## **II. Measures taken by Japan for PBF Management**

As stated above, most of the Japanese PBF catches 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 the WCPFC decisions and ISC advice.

### **1. Regulation (Paragraph 3 and 4 of CMM 2015-04)**

#### **(1) Effort Limitation in terms of fishing vessel**

##### **a. Artisanal fisheries**

##### **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 1<sup>st</sup>, 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 was introduced to small scale fishing vessels operating in the Pacific side in April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012.

##### **Licensing system (commencing on April 1, 2014)**

While the registration system provided useful information on artisanal fisheries for PBF, the system itself could not control the fishing effort of those fisheries. Therefore, from April 2014, the licensing system has been introduced to enable the national government to regulate the effort. All the vessels fishing for PBF are now obliged to obtain a license issued by the national government prior to fishing. This revision also corresponds to WCPFC10's agreement on elimination of the exemption for those fisheries on the fishing effort control. In 2015, 24,086 vessels were licensed.

##### **b. Other fisheries**

As stated above, fishing efforts of purse seine fisheries, longline fisheries and most of other fisheries are managed to be below the target level through the licensing system.

#### **(2) Catch limit for small fish**

In accordance with 50% small fish – fish less than 30kg – catch reduction commencing on 2015, Japan managed its annual small fish catch so as not to exceed 4,007t without exemption in 2015. Among 4,007t, 2,000t was allocated to purse seine fisheries and remaining 2,007t was to coastal fisheries including artisanal fisheries. Those catch limits are managed based on the concept shown in attachment A.

### **(3) Catch limit for large fish**

In accordance with paragraph 4, Japan instructed its fishermen not to increase catches of large fish – fish 30kg or larger – from 4,882t. In response to the instruction, purse seine associations introduced its catch limit of large fish for the fishery since 2015. The catch limit for 2015 is 3,098 t.

### **(4) Other regulations**

#### **a. Set-net: an administrative guidance not to increase set-nets for PBF**

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

#### **b. Aquaculture**

##### **A registration system and mandatory reporting**

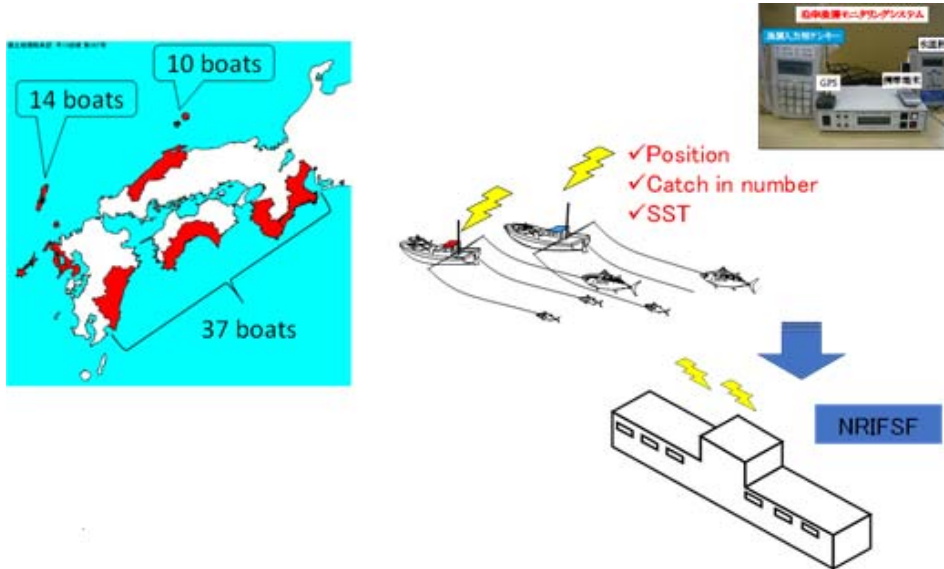
The fries used for PBF farming in Japan are mainly caught by the troll fishery and purse seine fishery. Because of the stricter management of Atlantic bluefin tuna at ICCAT, there was a concern that PBF farming in Japan might increase further. As a first step towards better management of PBF farming, starting in April 2011, all PBF aquaculture sites are required to register and report their farming activities, including information on caging and harvest. As of December 2015, 160 aquaculture sites were on the registration.

##### **Administrative instruction on PBF aquaculture**

As stated above, wild seeds for aquaculture are mainly caught by troll and purse seine. To prevent an increase in fry catches, the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries instructed prefectural governments in October 2012 not to increase the capacity of PBF farms which use wild seeds.

### **2. Monitoring of recruitment of juveniles (Paragraph 8 of CMM 2015-04)**

In order to monitor recruitment abundance of age-0 fish in a timely manner, a monitoring survey using troll fishing boats has been conducted since 2011 by the National Research Institute of Far Seas Fisheries (NRIFSF). The troll fishing boats for monitoring are equipped with data loggers with communication functions, which can collect information on the location, sea temperature and number of fish caught during operation. In 2015, there are 61 troll fishing boats with the data loggers in Mie, Wakayama, Kochi, Miyazaki, Nagasaki and Shimane Prefectures. This survey can provide the preliminary recruitment abundance originating from each of two spawning periods and grounds such as May-June in the waters of Nansei Archipelago and July-August in the Sea of Japan before the main fishing season of winter to spring. Based on the recruitment information, including that obtained through this survey, the NRIFSF has published CPUE time series for age-0 fish as preliminary estimations on recruitment abundance on the website of the Fishery Agency.



### 3. Commercial Transaction (Paragraph 9 of CMM 2015-04)

#### (1) International Trade of Products derived from Pacific Bluefin tuna

- PBF Import in 2015

According to the trade statistics of Japan, Japan imported 6,364 t of PBF; 5,756t (91%) of products imported from Mexico followed by Korea (594t, 9%), NZ (12t), Australia (0.4t). (Table1 and Figure1)

- PBF Export in 2015

57.6 t of PBF were exported from Japan in 2015; 59% of product was exported to China and 21% of product was exported to USA. (Table2 and Figure2)

Table1 and Figure1: The amount of import of PBF (Jan.-Dec. 2015) (unit :t)

	Fresh	Frozen	Total
Mexico	3,316.2	2,440.1	5,756.4
Korea	503.8	89.8	593.6
New Zealand	12.2	0.0	12.2
Australia	0.4	0.0	0.4
Cook	0.3	0.0	0.3
USA	0.2	0.0	0.2
Chinese Taipei	0.1	0.0	0.1
Cook	0.3	0.0	0.3
Tokelau	0.1	0.0	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,833.7</b>	<b>2,529.9</b>	<b>6,363.6</b>

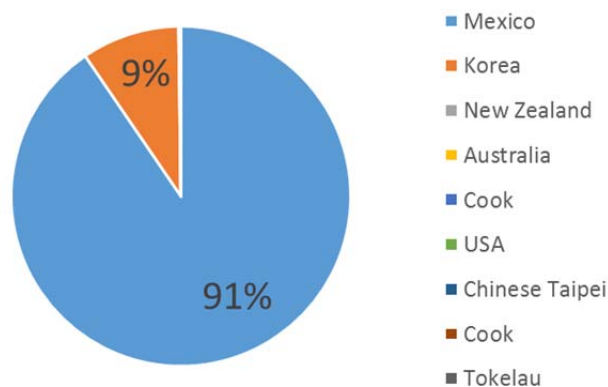
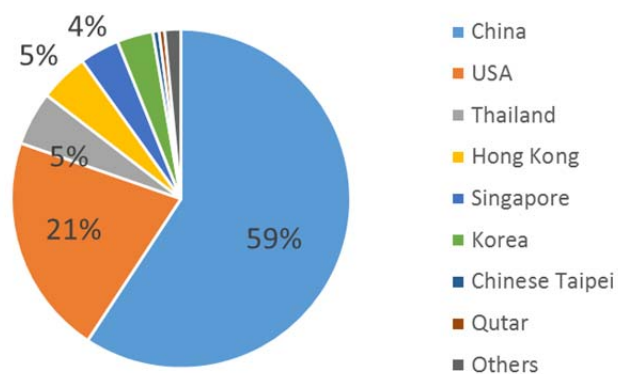


Table2 and Figure2: The amount of export of PBF (Jan.-Dec. 2014) (unit : t)

	Fresh	Frozen	Total
China	34.1	0.0	34.1
USA	12.1	0.0	12.1
Thailand	3.0	0.0	3.0
Hong Kong	2.7	0.0	2.7
Singapore	2.2	0.0	2.2
Korea	0.9	1.0	2.0
Chinese Taipei	0.3	0.0	0.3
Qutar	0.3	0.0	0.3
Others	0.9	0.0	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>56.6</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>57.6</b>



● **PBF Import in 2016 (As of 31, May)**

As of May 30th, a total of 3,148 t of PBF was imported in 2016; 2,337t (74%) of products imported from Mexico followed by Korea (802t, 5%).

**(2) Strengthened data collection for import**

**a. Korea**

In January 2010, a data collection system was established to require importers to make mandatory reporting for each import transaction when they 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 detailed 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

According to the data collection system Japan's import of PBF less than 30kg from Korea has reached 537.6t (about 74.9% of its catch limit (718t)) , as of July 22<sup>nd</sup>.

For PBF 30 kg or larger, the catch limit of Korea in 2016 is zero. The data collection system confirmed that about 300 t of PBF 30 kg or larger were exported from Korea to Japan. In accordance with the paragraph 9 of CMM 2015-04, Japan requested its importers or buyers to refrain voluntarily commercial transactions of PBF 30 kg or larger which were caught by Korean vessels. The amount of the catch was later confirmed to be 469 t by Korea.

**b. Mexico**

Starting in February 2011, the same mandatory reporting has been applied to importers that import PBF from Mexico.

**4. Data collecting system (Paragraph 11 of CMM 2015-04)**

**(1) Artisanal fisheries, set-nets and other local fisheries**

Prefectural governments collect the catch information from regional fisheries (including artisanal fisheries, set-nets and other small fisheries) every month and submit the data to the Japan Fisheries Information Service Center (JAFIC). JFA (Japanese Fisheries Agency) monitors the data.

**(2) Purse Seine**

Fisheries associations collect the fishing report from PS every time of landing and report the information to JAFIC.



### **(3) Other fisheries**

Other fisheries report the catch data directly to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery or JFA .

JFA checks the data and the aggregated catch volume is posted on the JFA's web-site and updated monthly.

### **5. Work with other IATTC members (Paragraph 14 of CMM 2015-04)**

- (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 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 meeting held in June 2012 at La Jolla, the 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 meeting held in June 2013 at Veracruz (Mexico), the Japanese delegation cooperated with IATTC member countries so that Conservation and Management Measures for PBF during 2014 was adopted.
- (5) During the 87th IATTC meeting (Resumed) in October 2014 at La Jolla California (USA), the Japanese delegation consulted with major stakeholders, Mexico and US, so that Conservation and Management Measure for PBF between 2015 and 2016 was adopted.
- (6) During the 90th IATTC meeting Japanese delegation cooperated with IATTC member countries so that IATTC agreed to hold the joint meeting with NC on Pacific Bluefin Tuna management during NC12.

## Management Scheme for small fish in Japan(1)

	No. of Vessel	Catch (05-09)	Main target (age)	2015 Management Scheme	
				Effort Limit	Catch limit
Purse Seine Fishery (Western Japan)	21	6,207 t	0-1	Licensing (Limited entry)	<i>Small fish catch limit</i> <b>2,000t</b>
Purse Seine Fishery (Pacific side)	26	729 t	2,3~	Licensing (Limited entry)	
Purse Seine Fishery (Sea of Japan)	19	2,431 t	3~	Licensing (Limited entry)	

## PBF Management Scheme for small fish in Japan (2)

	No. of Vessel	Catch (05-09)	Main target (age)	2015 Management Scheme		
				Effort Limit	Catch limit	
Artisanal Fishery	24,086 (No. of license)	2,539 t (in internal water and territorial sea : Troll)	0-1	Licensing (Limited entry)	Licensing system and mandatory reporting (since April 2014)	<i>Small fish catch limit</i> <b>2,007t</b>
Set Net	1,800 (No. of license)	1,940 t (internal water and territorial sea)	All	Licensing (Limited entry)	Administrative instruction by Minister not to increase the number of licenses (since Jan. 2010)	
Longline	536 (No. of license)	1,465 t (EEZ)	4~	Licensing (Limited entry)	-	
Others		867t				
Aquaculture	160 (No. of sites)	-		Licensing by prefectural government (Limited entry)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registration system and mandatory reporting (since Jan. 2011)</li> <li>Ministerial order not to increase the capacity of PBF aquacultures which farm wild seeds (since October 2012)</li> </ul>	-

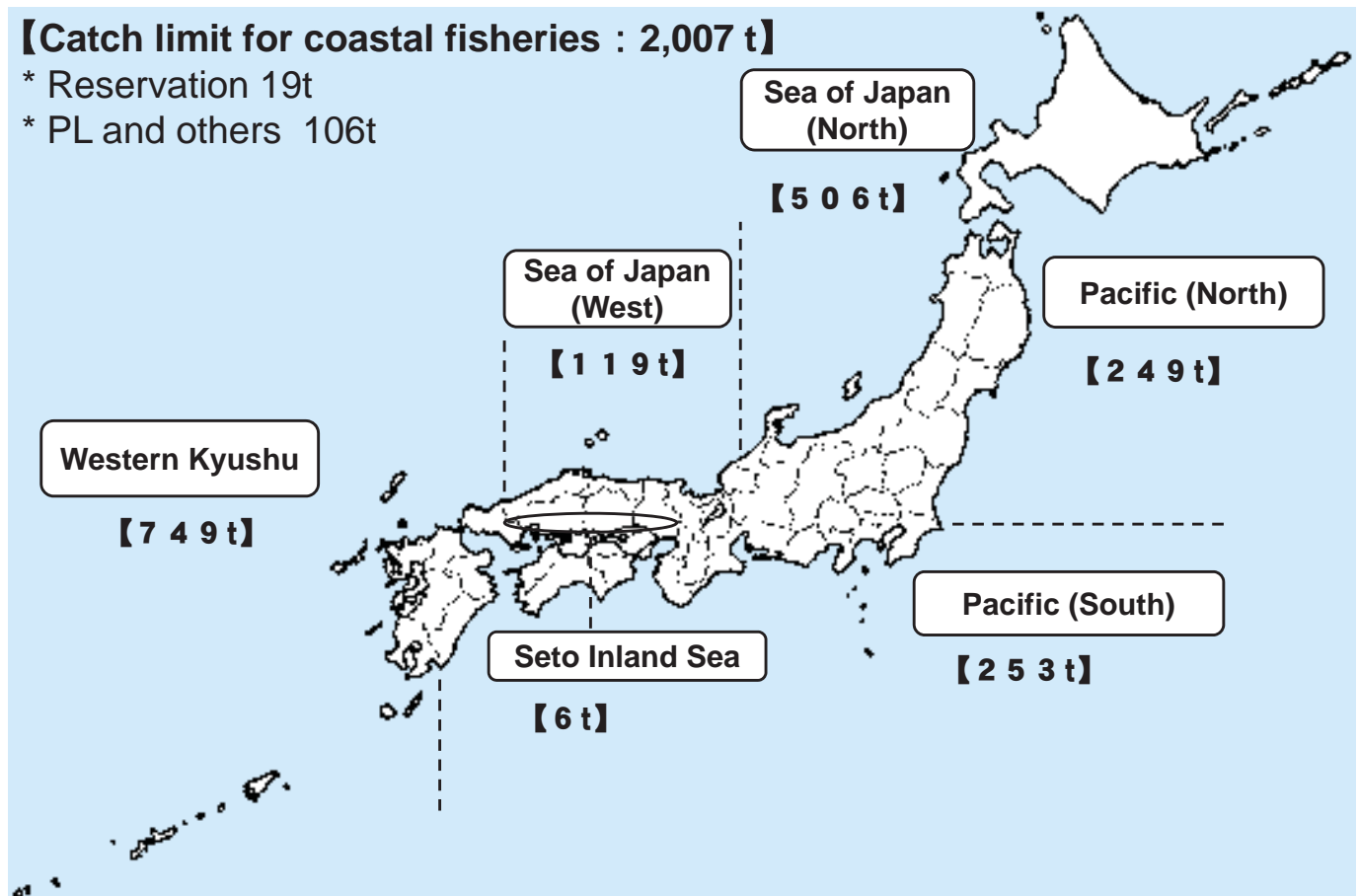
# Concept for management of small fish catch limit

For the compliance purpose, JFA has introduced measures as follows:

- **Purse seine fishery:**  
Catch limit is allocated to the purse seine 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.

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## Location of 6 Areas



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### Reporting template for the CMM 2015-04 (Pacific bluefin tuna)

Paragraph 6 of the CMM 2015-04 requires CCMs to report as follows:

6. CCMs shall report their 2002–2004 baseline fishing effort and <30 kg and  $\geq$ 30 kg catch levels for 2013 and 2014, by fishery, as referred to in the preceding two paragraphs, to the Executive Director by 31 July 2015. CCMs shall also report to the Executive Director by 31 July each year their fishing effort and <30 kg and  $\geq$ 30 kg catch levels, by fishery, for the previous year, accounting for all catches, including discards. The Executive Director will compile this information each year into an appropriate format for the use of the Northern Committee.

It is suggested that CCMs provide these reports in the following format:

Table 1. Fishing effort by vessels fishing for Pacific bluefin tuna *in the area north of 20° N in the Convention Area*

Fishery	Unit of fishing effort (e.g., sets, fishing days, vessels)	2002	2003	2004	2013	2014
Purse Seine	Number of vessels	69	60	59		
Longline Dist.&Off.	Number of vessels	654	632	613		
Longline Coastal	Number of vessels	399	422	386		
Pole & Line	Number of vessels	146	140	137		
Artisanal fisheries	Number of vessels	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown		
Set Net	Number of licenses	1,876	1,956	1,956		
Others	Number of vessels	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown		



Table 2. Catches (mt), including discards, of Pacific bluefin tuna *in the Convention Area* (include all the fisheries in the previous table, plus all other fisheries that catch any Pacific bluefin tuna)

Fishery	2002		2003		2004		2013		2014	
	<30kg	≥30kg	<30kg	≥30kg	<30kg	≥30kg	<30kg	≥30kg	<30kg	≥30kg
Purse Seine	5,174	3,730	4,995	774	3,466	4,792	989	1,781	3,409	2,047
Longline Dist.&Off.	0	52	0	97	0	240	0	14	0	15
Longline Coastal	0	794	0	1,152	0	1,616	235	543	122	550
Pole & Line	99	0	44	0	132	0	8	0	5	0
Artisanal fisheries	2,607	0	2,060	0	2,445	0	904	0	1,023	0
Set Net	1,008	92	648	191	660	235	1,020	395	1,375	532
Others	422	210	205	241	82	432	142	387	155	344

Fishery	2015	
	<30kg	≥30kg
Purse Seine	957	2,408
Longline Dist.&Off.	0	15
Longline Coastal	189	446
Pole & Line	9	0
Artisanal fisheries	441	21
Set Net	840	450
Others	129	285