



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE  
THIRTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**

**Rarotonga, Cook Islands  
9 – 17 August 2017**

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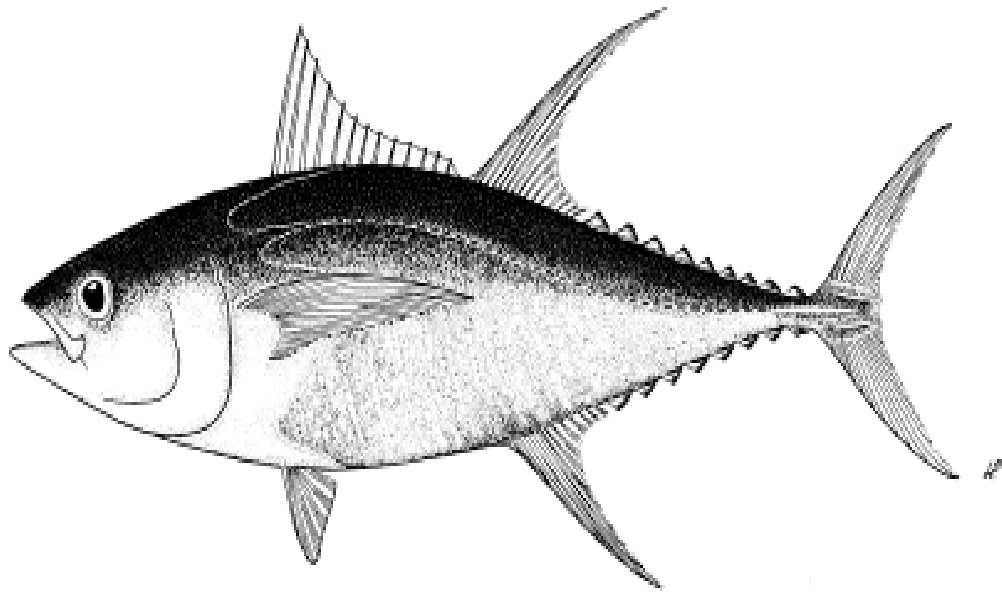
**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMISSION  
PART 1: INFORMATION ON FISHERIES, RESEARCH, AND STATISTICS**

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**WCPFC-SC13-AR/CCM-17  
Rev 1 (21 July 2017)**

**NIUE**

**COUNTRY FISHERIES REPORT – NIUE**



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 2017.	Yes
Niue submits operational data to the Commission (through SPC) as part of normal business processes.	

**Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries  
Ministry of Natural Resources  
Niue**

**2017**

## **1. Abstract**

Longline fishing in Niue's EEZ for 2016 increased from the previous year with the number of foreign offshore boats increasing from three to seven. However, although the average number of vessels for 2013 and 2014 in comparison to 2015 and 2016 remained the same, this was not the case for the reduction in the total average catches for the main species for the two latter periods. The total catch reduction in 2016 was especially quite significant.

Albacore remained consistent as the dominant catch making up almost 80% of the total weight, followed by yellowfin and bigeye.

## **2. Background**

Niue's catch composition has remained consistent for a number of years. Albacore dominates at almost 80% of the total weight every year. Yellowfin tuna and bigeye follow with very low but notable numbers compared to the rest.

At the peak of the Niue Fishing Factory processing plant, 2010 was the best catch rate being recorded with the timeline of 3 months fished. At this stage only a few Long Line operators were engaged in the Fishery.

The Fishing vessels were all Cook Island flagged and offloaded in American Samoa, with transshipment of all vessels at Niue designated port, with 100 percent observer coverage during transshipment. Niue has since licensed vessels flagged to other countries, including Fiji and Taiwan.

Niue's management of its artisanal fishery is improving steadily. As of the first quarter of 2016, a Fisheries data officer was dedicated to collect catch data all year round. As tourism is growing, so has the diversification of marine activities. Niue Fisheries would need to improve its management and resources if it's to effectively manage this change.

At the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual WCPFC meeting in Cairns, Niue declared its longline and purse seine limits. These limits are incorporated into the National Pelagic Management and Development Plan.

## **3. Annual Data Summary and Species Catch Distribution by Longline vessels from 2009-2016.**

The longline catch total in Niue's EEZ in 2016 increased significantly from the previous year. The contributing factors would be the increase in the number of vessels and the number of trips per vessel. Albacore showed a large increase from 57 metric tonnes in the previous year to 233 metric tonnes. Yellowfin and bigeye followed with catches more than double than in the previous year.

Catch (metric tonnes)											
Year	Vessels	ALB	BET	SKJ	YFT	BLM	BUM	MLS	SWO	OTHER	TOTAL
2009	3	138	7	5	12	1	1	4	1	8	177
2010	6	97	4	1	8	0	1	0	0	5	116
2011	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
2012	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
2013	6	416	18	9	44	0	19	2	4	31	543
2014	5	325	26	13	84	0	19	1	3	22	493
2015	3	57	4	1	11	0	3	0	0	3	79
2016	7	233	12	3	31	0	9	1	0.3	7	296.3

Table1. Annual catch estimates in Niue’s EEZ. Data Source: Operational (logsheet) catch/effort data, unraised. The catch for 2010 is for the first 4 months of the year before fishing operations by the fisheries partner ceased.

#### 4. Flag State Reporting

Niue is not a flag state

#### 5. Coastal State Reporting

Niue has a Management plan for pelagic fishing, with limits set on main tuna species targeted based on the best catch rates and those neighbouring countries catches that are similar in size and rate.

Niue reports its tuna fisheries catches to the Scientific Committee of the WCPFC.

#### 6. Socio-economic factors

Pelagic fish that is caught by licensed offshore foreign vessels is not sold in Niue. This catch is offloaded at ports designated by the flag state.

Fish that is caught by small artisanal vessels remains the main source of fish for locals. It is sold to restaurants and to the general public at around \$15 per kilo. All fishermen whether they are subsistence or chartered sell fish to general stores and restaurants or directly to the general public.

Chartered artisanal fishing has been very popular with tourists. The number of boats and average trips per day has increased over the years.

#### 7. Disposal of catch

The Disposal of catch is at the designated port of transshipment.

Sharks that are caught in Niue’s waters must be discarded as per Niue’s legislation and the National Pelagic Management plan.

#### 8. Onshore developments

The processing plant is still inactive and most shore developments are of access to onshore facilities (wharf upgrade).

The wharf upgrade is to provide ease of access and safer offload to fishing vessels given the open nature of Niue's only port. This was identified by the last operations as one key area for improvement.

### **9. Future Prospects of the fishery**

The Pelagic Development and Management plan is a mechanism to drive current and future prospects which can be aided by long term and short term partnerships.

### **10. Status of tuna fishery data collection systems**

The process of data collection is enshrined in the Licensing terms and conditions of foreign vessels fishing in Niue waters. Reporting and data collection is mandatory with authorised Officers rights to set the terms, though these are based on data requirements of SPC and WCPFC.

Penalties are imposed on denying or refusal of access to data.

For Artisanal data, a data officer has been appointed to collect the data 4 days per week. In previous years fishermen were relied upon to record their own data. Along with the offshore data, this data is entered and stored in the TUFMAN database developed by SPC.

### **11. Research activities covering target and non-target species**

Research of pelagic species is subject to the availability of funding and requirements under the National Pelagic Management and Development Plan.

In 2016, Niue was very fortunate to acquire the assistance of Pristine Seas of National Geographic to conduct a research on pelagic fish assemblage characteristics using mid-water baited remote underwater video stations.

In 2010, a wahoo tagging program was carried out using satellite tags and the ARGOS satellite tracking device to track the movement of wahoo.

Further research in these areas is expected subject to funding availability.




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**ADDENDUM TO ANNUAL REPORT PART 1**

**Specific information to be provided in Part 1 as required by CMMs<sup>1</sup>**

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**6 March 2017**

<b>CMM 2005-03</b> <b>[North Pacific Albacore], Para 4</b>	Niue has no flagged vessels.
<b>CMM 2006-04</b> <b>[South West striped Marlin], Para 4</b>	Niue has no flagged vessels.
<b>CMM 2009-03</b> <b>[Swordfish], Para 8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Niue has no flagged vessels.</li> <li>b. Niue has no chartered vessels.</li> <li>c. 0.3MT south of 20S</li> </ul>
<b>CMM 2009-06</b> <b>[Transshipment], Para 11 (ANNEX II)</b>	Niue has no flagged vessels.
<b>CMM 2010-07</b> <b>[Sharks], Para 4</b>	Niue has no flagged vessels, and no observer programme. Niue has a 100% non-retention requirement.
<b>CMM 2011-03</b> <b>[Impact of PS fishing on cetaceans], Para 4</b>	Niue has no flagged vessels.
<b>CMM 2011-04</b> <b>[Oceanic whitetip sharks], Para 3</b>	<p>Niue has no flagged vessels, and no observer programme.</p> <p>Niue has a non-retention requirement.</p>

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<sup>1</sup> Reporting requirements requested by CMMs and decisions by the Commission, as of WCPFC13 (Dec 2016)

<b>CMM 2012-04</b> <b>[Whale sharks],</b> <b>Para 06</b>	Niue has no flagged vessels.
<b>CMM 2012-07</b> <b>[Seabirds], Para</b> <b>9</b>	Niue has no flagged vessels, and no observer programme.  No reported seabird interactions.
<b>CMM 2013-08</b> <b>[Silky sharks],</b> <b>Para 3</b>	Niue has no flagged vessels, and no observer programme.  Niue has a 100% non-retention requirement.
<b>Observer</b> <b>coverage(WCPF</b> <b>C 11 decision-</b> <b>para 484(b)</b>	Niue has no observer programme.
<b>CMM 2015-02</b> <b>[South Pacific</b> <b>Albacore], Para</b> <b>4</b>	Niue provides this information to CPFC through it regular provision of operational data to SPC.
<b><i>Commencing in reports that cover activities post-1 January 2017</i></b>	
<b>CMM 2015-03</b> <b>[Seabirds] Para</b> <b>9</b>	Niue has no flagged vessels, and no observer programme.  No reported seabird interactions.