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

WCPFC-SC17-AR/CCM-05

EUROPEAN UNION

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ANNUAL REPORT PART I

WCPFC FISHING SEASON 2020

PURSE SEINE AND LONG LINE FISHERIES

1.- PURSE SEINE

1.1.- Annual catch and effort by primary species in the WCPFC Convention Area.

Fishing vessels operating in the eastern Pacific Ocean normally have a 100% coverage of onboard observers, in line with the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP). Although this agreement applies to vessels operating in the IATTC Convention Area, the two EC-flagged purse seiners operating in the Pacific Ocean have carried out their activity in both the IATTC and WCPFC Convention Areas during 2020, and observers of the APICD have covered *c.* 22% of the catch weight in the WCPFC Convention Area. Information from trips not covered by observers of the APICD is obtained from logbooks. Total catches reported by the observers and estimated from logbooks, catches to the east of 150°W and discards of the three main target species during 2020, as well as in previous years, are shown in Table I.

2020				
	WCPFC	WCPFC east of 150°W	Discards	No. Sets
BET	1452	166	192	
SKJ	7953	512	132	212
YFT	1016	58	10	

2019				2018				
	WCPFC	east of 150°W	Discards	No. Sets	WCPFC	east of 150°W	Discards	No. Sets
BET	599	23	3		1189	78	3	
SKJ	8794	139	122	167	8648	1111	115	201
YFT	541	19	1		404	24	9	

2017				2016				
	WCPFC	east of 150°W	Discards	No. Sets	WCPFC	east of 150°W	Discards	No. Sets
BET	2686	20	47		2049	287	17	
SKJ	8027	111	55	159	6081	1462	170	102
YFT	628	23	3		378	105	4	

Table I- Total catches (in metric tonnes) of BET, SKJ and YFT from EU purse seiners in the WCPFC convention area, in the WCPFC-CA east of the 150°W meridian, estimated discards and number of sets during the latest 5 years.

1.2.- Number of vessels by size

In 2020, 2 EU-Spain flagged purse seiners fished in the WCPFC-CA, with gross register tonnages of 1562 and 2502 GRT. Tuna are mainly caught by sets on FADs, but also on free schools. Catches are frozen onboard in salt vats. Table II summarizes the number of vessels and total gross register tonnages from the beginning of the fishery in the WCPFC-CA.

Year	GRT	No. vessels
1996	1351	1
1997	1351	1
1998	4419	3
1999	8176	4
2000	6887	4
2001	9172	4
2002	9172	4
2003	10678	5
2004	6532	3
2005	6532	3
2006	6532	3
2007	9732	4
2008	9732	4
2009	9732	4
2010	9732	4
2011	9732	4
2012	9732	4
2013	9732	4
2014	9732	4
2015	9732	4
2016	4064	2
2017	4064	2
2018	4064	2
2019	4064	2
2020	4064	2

Table II- Number of EU purse seiners and total gross register tonnage in the WCPFC-CA by year.

1.3.- Fishing patterns

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the catches (5° x 5°) of EU purse seiners in the WCPFC-CA during 2020 and the five previous years.

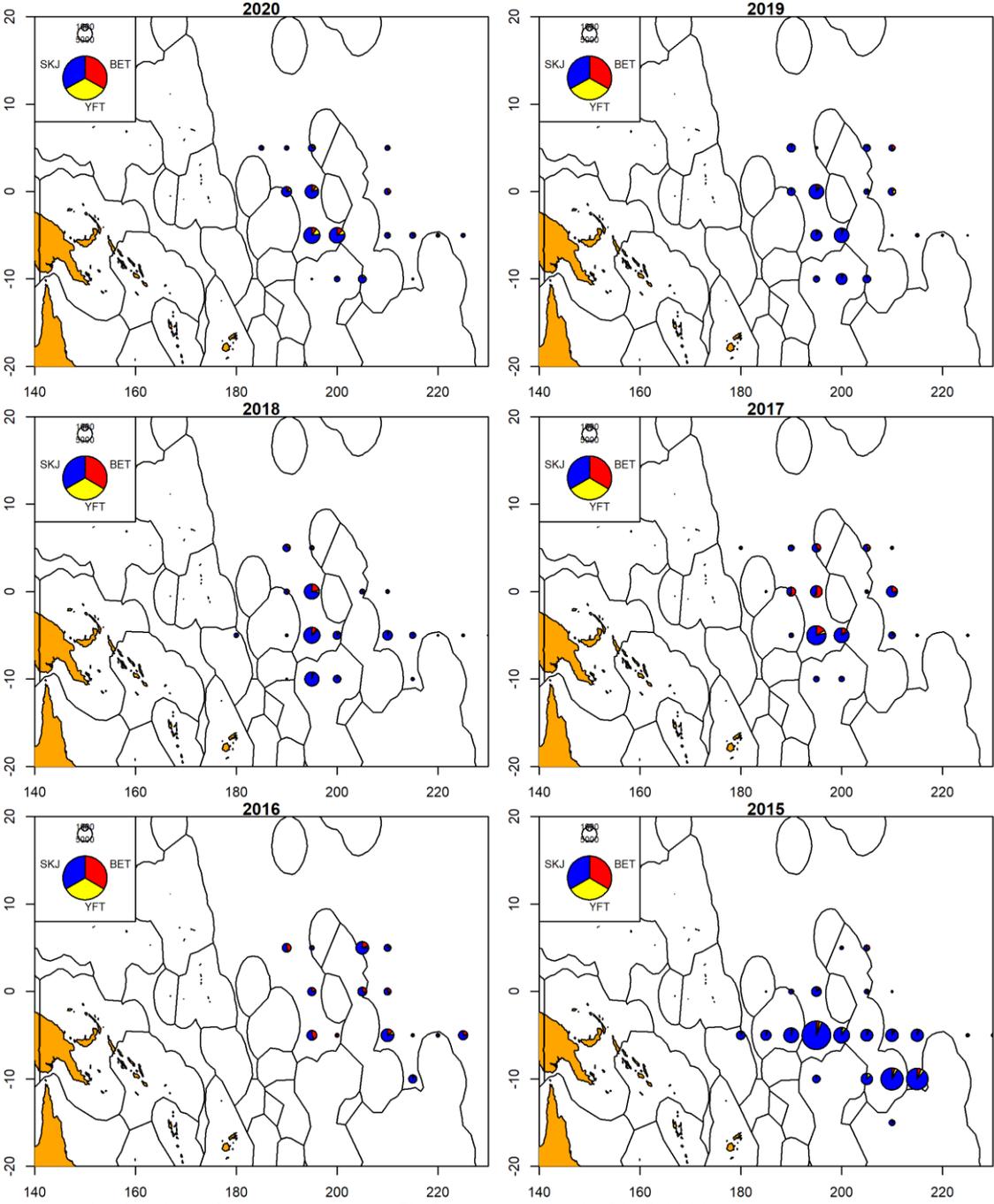


Fig. 1- Distribution of catches by area (5°x5°) and species in 2015-2020.

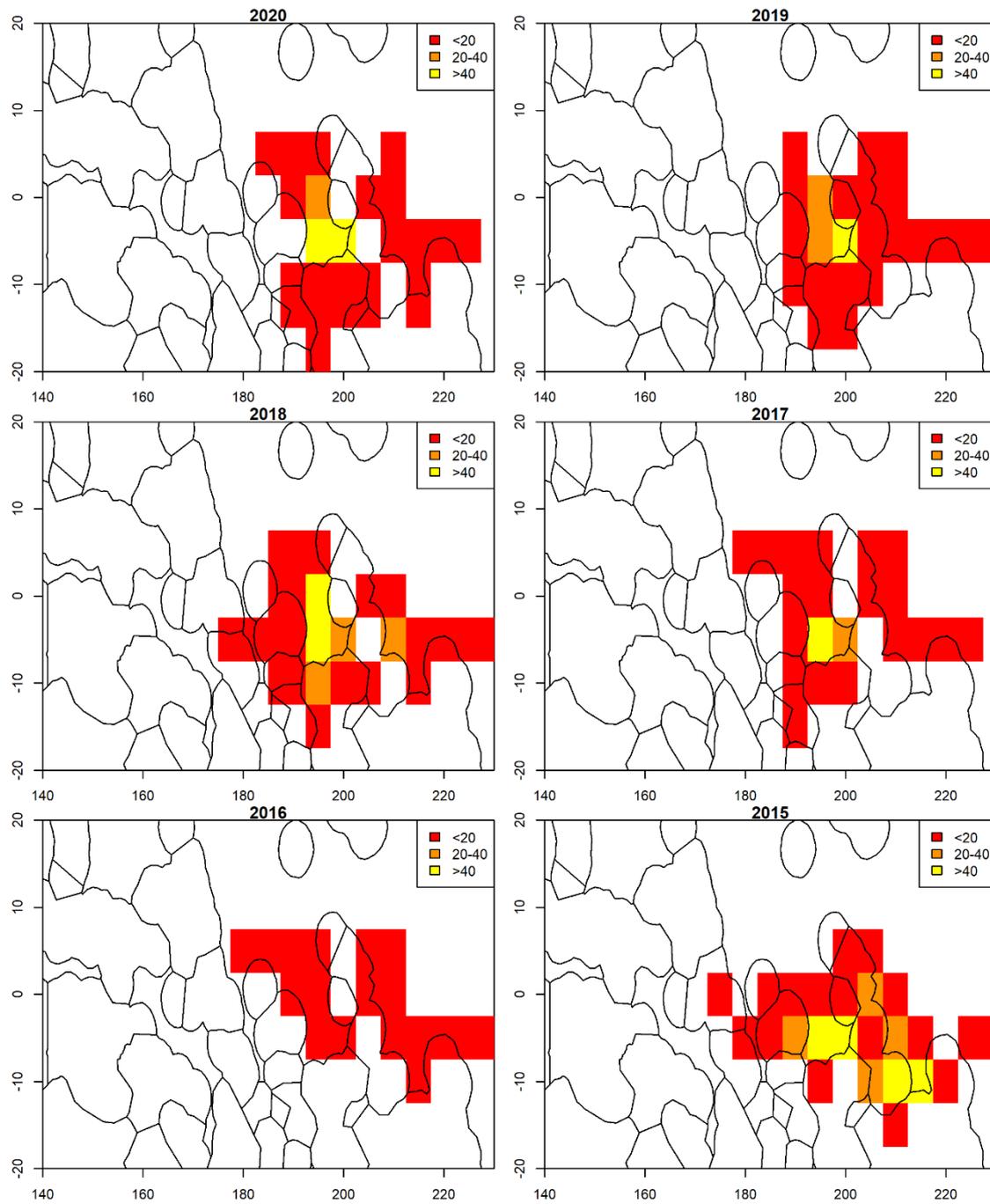


Fig. 2.- Distribution of the purse seine effort, in fishing days, by area (5°x5°) and year.

There has been no significant change in the distribution of the catch and effort as compared to previous years.

1.4.- Estimated total catches of non-target, associated and dependent species.

Tables III and IV summarize the purse seine bycatch by species in the WCPFC-CA in 2020 and 2019, respectively. In most cases, the observers only record the number of fish of each species per set. The total weight has been estimated by multiplying the number of fish in each size category (small, medium, large) by an average weight for the purse seine fishery provided by the IATTC (N. Vogel, pers. comm.).

In 2020, 5 species/groups accounted for more than 95% of the bycatch, in terms of weight: Silky shark, blue marlin, dolphinfish, wahoo and *Carcharhinus spp.* Around 64% of the *Carcharhinus falciformis*, the main bycatch species of the purse seine fleet, as well as 97% (31 out of 32 specimens) of the *C. longimanus* captured in 2020 were estimated to be released alive.

There is a mandatory Spanish protocol for releasing marine turtles caught by purse seine alive. All turtles involved in fishing operations must be released in the best conditions as soon as possible. In 2020, four marine turtles were observed involved in purse seine fishing operations in the WCPFC-CA (1 olive ridley, 1 hawksbill, 1 leatherback and 1 unidentified). All of them were released unharmed according to the observer reports.

On 19/01/2020 09:00 local time, at 00°06'S 169°15'W, a small whale shark weighing around 25 kg, which had not been observed before, was detected once the pursuing manoeuvre had been completed. It was carefully hauled onboard with the aid of the brailer and examined in presence of the ROP observer. It was apparently unharmed and after being set free, it swam away from the vessel.

	Species	WCPFC	East of 150 ° W
BILLFISH	<i>Makaira nigricans</i>	3.84	0.04
	<i>Makaira, Tetrapturus</i>	0.62	0.20
SHARKS & RAYS	<i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i>	27.60	0.26
	<i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i>	0.22	0.00
	<i>Carcharhinus spp.</i>	0.92	0.17
	<i>Sphyrna mokarran</i>	0.14	0.00
OTHER FISH	<i>Acanthocybium solandri</i>	1.56	0.63
	<i>Aluterus scriptus</i>	<0.01	<0.01
	<i>Canthidermis maculatus</i>	0.01	<0.01
	<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>	2.89	0.83

<i>Elagatis bipinnulata</i>	0.11	0.01
<i>Kyphosus elegans</i>	<0.01	<0.01
<i>Lobotes surinamensis</i>	<0.01	<0.01
<i>Seriola, Caranx spp.</i>	<0.01	<0.01
<i>Sphyraena barracuda</i>	0.03	0.00

Table III.- Purse seine bycatch in metric tonnes in the WCPFC-CA and in the WCPFC-CA east of meridian 150°W during 2020. These figures have been estimated from the bycatch records of the trips carrying observers of the AIDCP (c. 22% of the total catch in weight in the WCPFC-CA).

	Species	WCPFC	East of 150 ° W
BILLFISH	<i>Makaira nigricans</i>	5.60	0.00
	<i>Makaira, Tetrapturus</i>	1.77	0.00
SHARKS & RAYS	<i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i>	24.18	0.51
	<i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i>	0.88	0.00
	<i>Carcharhinus spp.</i>	0.17	0.00
	<i>Mobula spp.</i>	0.03	0.00
	<i>Mobulidae</i>	0.02	0.02
OTHER FISH	<i>Acanthocybium solandri</i>	1.50	0.34
	<i>Canthidermis maculatus</i>	0.02	<0.01
	<i>Caranx sexfasciatus</i>	<0.01	<0.01
	<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>	2.54	0.16
	<i>Elagatis bipinnulata</i>	0.09	<0.01
	<i>Sphyraena barracuda</i>	0.01	0.00
	<i>Others, NEI</i>	<0.01	<0.01

Table IV.- Purse seine bycatch in metric tonnes in the WCPFC-CA and in the WCPFC-CA east of meridian 150°W during 2019. These figures have been estimated from the bycatch records of the trips carrying observers of the AIDCP (c. 60% of the total catch in weight in the WCPFC-CA).

1.5- RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

22 % of the catch in the WCPFC-CA, including bycatch, was monitored by IATTC and national program observers of the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP) in 2020. This coverage was unusually low due to the pandemic situation.

Additionally, in keeping with the current CMMs, EU purse seiners fishing in the WCPFC-CA normally have a 100% coverage of ROP observers. These observers also record information on size and species composition, vessel activity, bycatch, etc. However, this information is submitted directly to the Science Service Provider and not reported to the flag State, and is not included in the current report.

2. LONG LINE FISHERY

The activity of the fleet commenced in 2004, and it has been targeting swordfish since then. The Spanish long line fleet in 2020 was composed by 3 long liners. The data hereby included have been obtained from mandatory electronic logbooks for 2020 activity. All Spanish flagged longliners process the swordfish on board in dressed weight (eliminating the head, viscera and fins) and keep it frozen.

2.1. Annual catch and effort by primary species and gear in the WCPFC Convention Area

Division	Buque	SWO
77	CARMEN TERE	114,4478
	ILLA GAVEIRA	121,1830
	PLAYA ZAHARA	75,2238
81	CARMEN TERE	413,5978
	ILLA GAVEIRA	295,8643
	PLAYA ZAHARA	395,6903
Total (t)		1416,0070

Table 5. Total estimated catches by species in the Pacific Ocean South of the Equator (t)

It has to be noted that the catches included the total amount as result of the activity of these vessels in the WCPFC area, overlapping area and IATTC area, since these vessels may operate in the IATTC area.

2.2. Number of vessels by gear and size (fleet characteristic)

Gear	LONGLINE
Fleet	SPAIN (EU)
Size class (GRT)	
0-50	0
50-200	0
201-500	3
500+	0

VESSEL NAME	AUTHORIZATION PERIOD
CARMEN TERE	01/01 to 31/12/2020
ILLA GAVEIRA	01/01 to 31/12/2020
PLAYA ZAHARA	01/01 to 31/12/2020

2.3. Fishing patterns

Spanish longline vessels in the Western and Central Pacific operate in the temperate area south of 20° south and the mostly work around of 30° south. The port of Auckland (New Zealand) is the main hub for landings and supply activities. Long distances toward south are usually covered before starting fishing activities.

The vessels carry on lengthy trips lasting for 2 to 3 months. The main catches are swordfish and blue shark. They do not catch tropical sensitive shark species such as oceanic whitetip shark, silky shark or whale shark. They displayed an average of 1.181 hooks per vessel in 2020. They usually deploy wire leaders.

2.4. Estimated total catches of non-target, associated and dependent species

It has to be noted that the catches in the following table include the total amount as result of the activity of these vessels in the WCPFC area, overlapping area and IATTC area, since these vessels may operate in the IATTC area.

Division	Buque	ALB	BET	BLM	MLS	YFT	BUM	SKJ	PBF	LMA	BSH	SMA
77	CARMEN TERE	0,3497	5,7564	1,4248	2,6013	12,8609	6,1763	-	-	-	36,1046	27,1607
	ILLA GAVEIRA		0,7263	2,3647	4,2497	1,0204		-	-	-	31,7299	35,0825
	PLAYA ZAHARA	0,1377	3,3664	2,6006		6,0263	7,8871	-	-	-	30,8287	20,5886
81	CARMEN TERE	1,3742	12,9683	3,6280	3,6608	5,4077	4,1444	-	-	-	555,7326	153,3268
	ILLA GAVEIRA		2,5259	1,4463	4,1141	0,2931		-	-	-	254,5333	83,4616
	PLAYA ZAHARA	1,9887	14,7358	6,5584	1,2935	7,1114	5,8399	-	-	-	436,4788	146,0998
Total		3,8502	40,0791	18,0227	15,9194	32,7197	24,0477	-	-	-	1345,4079	465,7200

Table 6. Total estimated catches by species in the Pacific Ocean South of the Equator (t)