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SEVENTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**

**ELECTRONIC MEETING
11-19 August 2021**

Japan Trust Fund Status Report 2021

WCPFC-SC17-2021/ RP-JTF-01

**Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and
Secretariat**

Introduction

The majority of the WCPFC Members are developing states including Small Island Developing States (SIDS), whose capacities to implement conservation and management measures are limited and would benefit from strengthened capacity. The WCPFC Project on Capacity Building in Fisheries Statistics, Regulations and Enforcement for SIDS originated from a Japanese funding proposal to the WCPFC made in December 2005, also known as the Japan Trust Fund (JTF). The primary objective of this project is to support capacity building of the developing countries of the WCPFC members, especially SIDS. The initial phase of the project was for 5 years starting from 2006 to 2011 with a total available funding of approximately USD 2 million.

Given the success of and general support for the project in its first 5-year phase, the Fisheries Agency of Japan sought and successfully secured a budget of around USD 2 million in total, for the second 5-year phase. The objectives and terms of reference for the second phase were similar to the previous phase, with an emphasis on enforcement and compliance. In 2016 the Japanese government granted an extension of one year to the second phase, supporting projects in 2017, which was further extended to include another year, 2018.

In 2019, the Japanese Fisheries Agency approved a third phase for the JTF retaining the same objectives and terms of reference for another 5 years. In 2020, there were five (5) successful proposals supported by JTF with a budget allocation of USD 232,821.00. The same funding level was made available for the JTF for 2021, that is USD 232,821.00. After deduction of the 7.5% administrative fee of USD 17,461.58, the balance available for 2021 projects amounts to USD 215,359.42. Six (6) proposals were received by the end of January 2021 and a summary of 2021 approved projects and their details are in found in **Annex 1** to this report.

All JTF projects conducted are found on the WCPFC website at <https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/japan-trust-fund-summary-projects-2012-date>. Brief country reports of completed JTF projects in 2020 are found in **Japan Trust Fund Annual Report 2021** (<https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/jtf-annrep->

[2020/japan-trust-fund-annual-report-2020](#)). While the status reports for carried-over projects from previous years are detailed in **Annex 2** of this report. Additional information from previous years project are contained in **Annex 3** to this report.

Japan Trust Fund – Objectives and Expected Activities

The objectives and expected activities for the JTF contained in the Consolidated Project Document (2019), which provides guidelines for the Steering Committee to select project proposals. They may be conveniently summarized as follow:

“The basic objectives of this project are, within the purview of WCPFC, to assist SIDS Members, and other developing States Members as appropriate, in improving their capacities in:

- a. *Data collection and reporting of their fisheries and associated activities, in particular, those required by WCPFC, and*
- b. *Establishment of fisheries regulation and its effective enforcement, in particular, the conservation and management measures adopted by WCPFC*

In order to pursue these objectives, following activities may be implemented under the Project:

- a. *Data collection and reporting of their fisheries and associated activities, in particular, those required by WCPFC:*
 - *identify and examine the source of uncertainty in data collection and reporting;*
 - *develop and implement capacity-building programs to improve fisheries data collection and reporting;*
 - *assist if necessary WCPFC to facilitate appropriate opportunities (e.g., meetings, workshops) to consider improved data collection and reporting of their fisheries by developing States and their participation in the Commission.*
- b. *Establishment of fisheries regulation and its effective monitoring, control and enforcement, in particular, the requirements by WCPFC*
 - *review enforcement and monitoring mechanisms in developing states Members in terms of legal, institutional and technical aspects and identify opportunities for strengthening these areas;*
 - *develop and implement capacity-building programs to improve fisheries monitoring regulation and enforcement by developing states members;*
 - *assist if necessary WCPFC to hold appropriate opportunities to consider improved enforcement by developing States under their jurisdiction and through their participation in the Commission.”*

Annex 1. Summary of JTF Work Plan for 2021 (Year 3, Phase 3 Program)

#	Beneficiary Member(s)	Contacts	Project Title	Purpose/Summary	Budget (USD)
1	Solomon Islands	Mr. Derrick Tagosia Electronic Reporting and Monitoring Coordinator Email: DTagosia@fisheries.gov.sb Phone: +677 39143/30264	Training and supporting of our Solomon Islands (SI) Electronic Monitoring (EM) Analysts to continue analyzing EM records from EM systems installed on Longline fishing vessels	This Project seeks financial support to Solomon Islands EM Analysts to continue analyzing EM records after September 2021, to provide useful data and information to fisheries management for decision making and to other national and regional stakeholders as mandated by SI membership agreements and efforts to ensure the sustainability of tuna resources for future generations.	39,768.75
<p><i>Status:</i></p> <p>Recruitment of the 5 EM analysts is in progress. Solomon Islands conducted shortlisting of applicants in June 2021. Until September 2021, the EM analysts are supported by the World Bank PROP project, after PROP closes on September 30, 2021, then the funding that Solomon Islands requested will be used to support EM analysts until March of 2022.</p>					
2	Solomon Islands	Mr. Derrick Tagosia Electronic Reporting and Monitoring Coordinator Email: DTagosia@fisheries.gov.sb Phone: +677 39143/30264	Training of Solomon Islands Fisheries Observers on the Electronic Reporting Observer eObs App to collect data electronically on observer trips to strengthen MCS processes	This Project is expected to train observers on how to use iFIMS electronic reporting system that includes use of electronic reporting system to enter and send daily trip data to the ministry for monitoring, control and surveillance purposes and trial out the said system until such a time where observer trip reporting can be paperless.	41,291.25

Status:

Solomon Islands started their observer training on the 28th of June 2021 and should complete all trainings by the end of September or October 2021. Solomon Islands already liaise with the PNAO trainers that will conduct the training via zoom, and they are on standby for these trainings.

3.	Tonga	<p>Dr. Tuikolongahau Halafihi CEO for Fisheries Email: supi64t@gmail.com; thalafihi@tongafish.gov.to, ceo@tongafish.gov.to</p> <p>Mr. Poasi Ngaluafe Head of Fisheries Science Division Email: poasi.ngaluafe@tongafish.gov.to</p> <p>Ms. Lavinia Vaipuna Head of Offshore Section Email: lavinia@tongafish.gov.to</p>	Support and maintain high level data collection and to improve management of tuna fisheries in Tonga, as well as providing awareness on conservation of tuna species	This activity would like to continue funding tuna data collection through its port sampling activities for 2021 including training of all new vessel masters, port samplers and artisanal data officers on e-reporting. It is also expected that data collection will be expanded to outer islands of Tonga.	39,515.00
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Status:

All domestic tuna vessels are using Onboard applications for their logsheets data entry and data submission.

E-logs Training: ONBOARD, ONSHORE, TAILS

A. ONBOARD application

- ✓ A refresher ONBOARD Training was conducted for domestic tuna fishing vessels sea masters. In addition, all domestic tuna fishing vessels used ONBOARD apps for data entry and data submission.
- ✓ An ONBOARD training was conducted along with assistance from SPC for the foreign fishing company's agent, staff and two sea masters. As a result, two foreign fishing vessels are now using the apps for data entry and data submission. The target for this year is for a 100% coverage e-logs submission from all tuna domestic fishing vessels and at least 5 foreign fishing vessels (FFV's).

B. ONSHORE and TAILS application

- ✓ Tonga conducted an ONSHORE and TAILS application training for newly recruited staff. As a result, Tonga have fully implemented TAILS in 'Eua island, and Tonga is also planning to conduct a TAILS training in Ha'apai soon.
- ✓ All Domestic and Foreign Fishing Vessels port-sampling data collection uses ONSHORE apps for data entry and data submission.
- ✓ Tablets for these e-logs data collections donated by SPC and the ongoing World Bank Project are currently implemented at the Ministry of Fisheries, Tonga.

New Recruits:

Tonga (Ministry of Fisheries) recruited seven daily paid laborers under the JTF project for Tuna Artisanal data collection. They also assisted in port sampling and unloading data collection for domestic and foreign fishing vessels.

Tonga is also planning on recruiting more daily paid staff to collect artisanal tuna data from the Ha'apai island groups soon and the two Niua island groups.

4	Tonga	<p>Dr. Tuikolongahau Halafi CEO for Fisheries Email: ceo@tongafish.gov.to</p> <p>Mele To'a 'Atuekaho Deputy CEO, Compliance Division Email: meletoaatuekaho@gmail.com</p> <p>Ms. Kalolaine Manuopangi Observer Coordinator Email: kmanuopangai@gmail.com</p>	Capacity building and strengthening of Tonga National Observer Program	<p>This Project seeks to strengthen Tonga's national observer program by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building capacity of senior observers, who are also certified debriefers and creating a career path for these observers by utilizing them whilst on-shore to screen, debrief and enter observer data into the regional observer database called TUFMAN- 2. Building capacity of Tonga's national observers by encouraging and promoting quality observer data as well as creating a performance-based incentive to keep observers on the job. 	37,800.00
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Status:

Fund received from the JTF and available for utilization by Tonga Observer Program on April 2021 was USD\$37,800.00, converted to TOP\$83,813.75 pa'anga.

A. Observer Data Entry

It is now an observer obligation to enter observer data after debriefed by a certified Debriefer. SPC conducted an observer data entry training for observers and debriefers. This enables observers to enter their own data. It is a great improvement, before data were scanned and sent to SPC to enter.

B. Observer Bonus

A performance-based incentive is awarded to observers after data has been debriefed by a certified debriefer and scrutinized by Tonga Observer Coordinator and data is deemed satisfactory.

As we are all aware that the worldwide effect of COVID-19 pandemic affected all observer program throughout the region. This project is expected to help minimize the high rate of observer turn over. They are paid by vessel operators for observer fees, awarded bonus for good quality data and also entering their data are both funded by Japan Trust Fund.

It is recommended that unused funds will continue to finance observer data entry and bonus for good quality data until fund is fully utilized.

5	Tonga	Dr. Tuikolongahau Halafihi CEO for Fisheries Email: supi64t@gmail.com ; thalafihi@tongafish.gov.to ; ceo@tongafish.gov.to	Capacity building and strengthening of Tonga's Fisheries Legal Section	The objective of the Project is for capacity building and strengthening Tonga's Fisheries Legal Section by the recruitment of a paralegal officer to assist in research and administrative matters to help progress the ongoing legislative review that includes inclusion of WCPFC CMMs in the legislative framework.	5,697.10
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Status:

The Administrative Assistant have been providing great assistance to the progressing of the work in the Legal Section both in the main island and in the outer islands. This assistance has greatly contributed to the progressing of various tasks relating to ongoing review of the law and terms and conditions of fishing vessels to ensure that they are in line with CMMs.

6	Vanuatu	Mr Tony TALEO Deputy Director (Oceanic)	Feasibility and Cost-Benefit Assessment of	The purpose of the present Project is to investigate appropriate	51,287.32
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	<p>Vanuatu Fisheries Department Tel: +678 7748056/ 5463595 E-mail: ttaleo@vanuatu.gov.vu</p> <p>Mr John MAHIT Observer Programme Coordinator Vanuatu Fisheries Department Tel: +678 7101857/ 5967727 E-mail: jomahit@vanuatu.gov.vu</p> <p>Fisheries Department, Private Mail Bag 9045, Port Vila, Vanuatu</p>	Electronic Monitoring on Vanuatu fishing vessels	logistical arrangements through which hard drives from e-monitoring equipment can be reliably transferred from the vessels concerned to the VFD and analyzed in a timely manner. As part of the Project, an assessment of the costs and benefits of e-monitoring arrangements will be made, and compared to the costs and benefits of the Vanuatu National Observer Programme, which currently employs 56 human observers. The results of the study will guide Vanuatu's policy on e-monitoring implementation going forward.		
Status:					
Vanuatu just received the fund on the 01 st of June 2021. Progress in place in setting the up the EMS office.					
	Sub-total			Sum of project budget requested	\$215,359.42
	WCPFC	Aaron Nighswander aaron.nighswander@wcpfc.int	7.5% administrative fee	Overhead	\$232,821.00 x 0.075 = \$17,461.58
	Grand Total			Total JTF for 2021	\$232,821.00

Annex 2. Carried-over projects from previous years

#	Beneficiary Member(s)	Contacts	Project Title	Purpose/Summary	Budget (USD)
1	Kiribati	<p>Kaon Tiamere Principal Fisheries Officer License and Compliance Division Ministry of Fisheries & Marine Resources Development (MFMRD) Email: kaont@mfmr.gov.ki</p>	Kiribati Capacity Building for Harvest Strategy for 2020	This proposal seeks to build capacity of Kiribati fisheries officers on harvest strategy (HS) work to enable them to fully participate in decision making process for HS as a member of the WCPFC.	54,010.00
<p><u>Status:</u></p> <p>Kiribati received the fund in March 2020 and is now seeking assistance from SPC and others to assist in conducting a virtual workshop with Fisheries Officers and Managers on Harvest Strategy. The national workshop which will engaged SPC staff and the attachments of Kiribati's staff with SPC will be delayed until such time travel restriction is lifted. Given the ongoing pandemic situation and travel restrictions, the project is yet commence therefore Kiribati request extension of this project for consideration until the time agreed between MFMRD and SPC to commence the project.</p>					
2	Palau	<p>Kathleen Sisor Fisheries Licensing/Revenue Officer II Ministry of Natural Resources Environment and Tourism P.O.BOX 117, Malakal Street Koror, Republic of Palau 96940 Email: utau.sisor@gmail.com</p> <p>Persis Omelau Fisheries Specialist Division of Oceanic Fisheries Management Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Tourism Palau Government P.O. Box 117 Koror, PW 96940 Email: omelaupersis@gmail.com</p>	Domestic Tuna Market Development Project	This proposal seeks to strengthen and improve data collection system in Palau in order to understand the catch landings by vessel and the market structure in order to inform and advise future management decisions.	70,011.35

Status:

The initial period of the Project was delayed due to COVID-19 and project extension was requested as a result. Although some of the project objectives are not met at the moment, the main purpose of the Project was uninterrupted by the circumstances of COVID-19. An enhanced data collection system to understand Palau's fishery was established and data has been collected since. Additional supplementing information was collected to reflect the market system since the full implementation of Palau National Marine Sanctuary (PNMS,) which aimed at analyzing BOFI's sales and market structure.

Palau is currently facing constraints due to the COVID-19. Although Palau currently does not have positive COVID-19 cases, precautions still remain in place until further notice. Such precautions have limited mass gatherings which have hindered our proposed work to conduct workshops and trainings on data sampling methods. However, other approaches (e.g. virtual training) are taken into consideration to carry on project activities as planned.

As of June 22, 2021, this project is still ongoing. Data from both catch landings by vessels and market structure are still being collected and continue to populate local database. Please refer to Annex 3. II for more detailed information.

3	Cook Islands	Mr Andrew Jones Senior Fisheries Officer A.Jones@mmr.gov.ck	Development of National Competent Authority [HACCP strategy] for Cook Islands Offshore Fisheries	This project seeks to support a comprehensive review of Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR) Competent Authority programs to ensure that current systems respond to the needs of MMR's fisheries management framework.	74,500.00
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Status:

Cook Islands informed the last Steering Committee that the Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR) Bill is currently undergoing stakeholder consultations which has delayed the development of the HACCP regulations. In 2020, Cook Islands requested to carry over the funds for an additional year and Japan agreed to the request for extension. Some of the project activities were hampered due to the COVID-19 pandemic such as international travels required for staff to complete sanitary inspections training on factory processing vessels. The work of this project is still ongoing. Please refer to Annex 3. I. A for additional information.

4	Cook Islands	Ms Pamela Maru Secretary MMR P.Maru@mmr.gov.ck	Improving the participation and engagement in international fisheries forums	The Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR) intends to implement a series of training sessions to engage and prepare staff to participate in regional fisheries meetings. This work supports professional development, including working with other Ministries training	62,886.10
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				programs such as diplomatic protocols and negotiations, to ensure staff are adequately trained before they venture into international meetings to represent the Cook Islands.	
<i>Status:</i>					
Cook Islands informed the last Steering Committee that a tender process of exemption from the Government's Tender Committee was requested to facilitate the use of funds for consultancy (above HoM discretionary level). With the assistance from FFA, a consultant from International Environmental Law Project was identified to deliver courses. The planning process on materials and course content is on progress. In 2020, Cook Islands requested to carry over the funds for an additional year and Japan agreed to the request for extension. The work of this project is still ongoing. Please refer to Annex 3. I. B for additional information.					
5	Nauru	Charleston Deiye Chief Executive Officer cdeiye@gmail.com	Capacity building and transfer of technology on at sea boarding and inspection procedures for Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority (NFMRA) vessel operators in Nauru's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).	NFMRA is keen to build the capacity of NFMRA officers in-country to improve its ability in conducting at-sea boarding and inspection within its area of jurisdiction to contribute to the conservation and management measures of fisheries resources of the region. Objectives: 1. To conduct training for NFMRA officers on best practice of at-sea boarding and inspection procedures. 2. To develop Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) for NFMRA on at-sea boarding and inspection. 3. To advise NFMRA on gears and equipment necessary for NFMRA officers in conducting at-sea boarding and inspection.	12,519.50
<i>Status:</i>					

The Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority (NFMRA) is keen to build the capacity of NFMRA officers in-country to improve its ability in conducting at-sea boarding and inspection within its area of jurisdiction to contribute to the conservation and management measures of fisheries resources of the region. This project has the following objectives: i) to conduct training for NFMRA officers on best practice of at-sea boarding and inspection procedures; ii) to develop Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) for NFMRA on at-sea boarding and inspection; and iii) to advise NFMRA on gears and equipment necessary for NFMRA officers in conducting at-sea boarding and inspection.

This Nauru project under the JTF experienced extended delays due to numerous logistical challenges and obstacles since it was first proposed. The first request for extension was granted in 2016. In 2017, Japan agreed for another extension. Noting that in April 2017, Nauru expected arrival of trailers for their multi-purpose boats, and thereafter they would be able to launch/retrieve the boats to and from the sea safely, after these the projects' at-sea boarding and inspection training would proceed. The former JTF Coordinator, Mr. Wataru Tanoue visited Nauru in 2018 and fully understand the difficulties Nauru faced. After Nauru has taken delivery of the trailers, there has been another setback that is due to the unseaworthiness of their boats. JTF recognising the importance of safety at sea has granted another extension into 2018 to allow the boats to be overhauled and the project activities be conducted. The project funds have not been utilized and the project activities has yet to be implemented. In August 2019 JTF Steering Committee, Nauru confirmed that a boat necessary for the project implementation were already secured. Nauru requested for approval to carry over the funds for an additional year (2020) and Japan agreed to the request for extension.

This year Nauru is proposing for an extension of the project in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nauru acknowledges the JTF Steering Committee's dilemma and seeks understanding to the ongoing issues beyond Nauru's control in implementing its project.

Nauru regrets that at this stage, it is still unable to commence its project due to the difficulty in organizing the travel of the consultant/trainer due to the border closures and travel from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the travel ban and the unknown end to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, Nauru will have difficulty in utilizing the current JTF grant; therefore, Nauru would like to propose the JTF Committee and NFMRA discuss an alternative approach that is in-line with the current project.

6	Tuvalu	<p>Mr. Samasoni Finikaso, Director, Fisheries Department, samfinikaso70@gmail.com</p> <p>Mr Tupulaga Poulasi Principal Fisheries Officer Fisheries Department, tupulagap@tuvalufisheries.tv</p>	Capacity Building training for Tuvalu Fisheries and Maritime Police officers to conduct High Seas Boarding Inspections (HSBI).	This project seeks enhance the capacity of fisheries and Police Maritime personnel to conduct boarding Inspections in the High Seas in accordance with WCPFC Boarding and Inspection Procedures (CMM 2006-08); by the end of the project the officers will fully understand HSBI procedures and the application of the CMM 2006-08 in the WCPF Convention area	15,000.00
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Status:

The project objectives are i) to enhance the capacity of fisheries and Police Maritime personnel to conduct High Seas Boarding Inspections in the High Seas in accordance with WCPFC Boarding and Inspection Procedures (CMM 2006-08); and ii) to prepare officers to fully understand the HSBI procedures and the application of the CMM 2006-08 in the WCPF Convention area.

Tuvalu has completed its project, but due to the support from other external funding there was a balance of AUD\$16,668.61. Tuvalu proposed to run similar training/workshop to make use of this funding, and to extend the capacity building activity within the Tuvalu Fisheries Department, Maritime Police officers and other relevant stakeholders on HSBI.

In 2019 the Steering Committee with advice from the JTF Coordinator accepted the Tuvalu's proposal to utilize the remaining funds and Japan also approved the request for extension by conducting a second workshop with the same objectives to the first.

In 2020, COVID-19 has presented numerous logistical challenges to conduct the second training, hence the department has decided for an extension of this project to 2021. New Zealand Ministry of Primary Industry has agreed to deliver this training in-country and due to the practical nature of the training; it will not be ideal to deliver the training on virtual mode. Tuvalu received its new Guardian Class Patrol Boat last year and there has been number of new officers recruited that needs to be trained. As the authorized HSBI vessel, the boarding and inspection evolutions for this training will be the ideal opportunity to test out the patrol boat new operating procedures as well as identifying the gaps and realign with HSBI procedures.

It is envisaged that the second training will also provide a trainer component for staffs from Fisheries and Police Maritime to deliver ongoing & future trainings, and to maintain the level of knowledge and skill to conduct HSBI as per CMM-2006-08. The current balance of the project fund is around AUD\$14,513.81.

As of June 2021, Tuvalu had made no further progress since our 2020 progress report. This is simply due to COVID-19 and restrictions on travels. The balance remains as it is since the last update in 2020. Please refer to Annex 3. III for more detailed information.

Annex 3. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM PREVIOUS YEARS PROJECTS

I. JTF PROGRESS REPORT FROM COOK ISLANDS

A. Development of National Competent Authority (HACCP Strategy) for Cook Islands Offshore Fisheries

Overview

Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) is a system that was developed for assuring pathogen-free foods. The Cook Islands have made significant legislative changes in recent years to meet competent authority requirements. With significant changes being made to fisheries management frameworks, and demands for responsible fishing nations to implement complementary Competent Authority (CA) regimes, it is timely that the Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR) undertakes an exercise to review its CA capabilities and determine how effective and responsive they are to meet the needs of its regulatory framework.

A review of all relevant legislation and policies, documenting CA needs and gaps – in accordance with international, regional and national law – comparing current CA programs and their effectiveness in response to management needs is required.

Objectives

To undertake a comprehensive review of MMR's offshore fisheries Competent Authority programs.

Work Proposed

- MoU – Develop and finalise a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Health (MoH) and MMR to provide legal powers to MMR as a CA
- HACCP Strategy – Development of a national HACCP strategy
- Implementation plan – Development of an implementation plan for the HACCP strategy, including completion of Part 2 training
- Regulations – Develop and finalise regulations, standards, policies and a CA Checklist
- Calendar - Finalise Competent Authority training and implementation calendar for 2019
- Awareness – Create awareness and education information packs for stakeholders and the general public on CA requirements, standards and legislation etc.
- Consultation – Hold consultations with stake holders and the general public on CA work
- Inspections – undertake inspections to train fisheries officers on HACCP CA requirements

Project Update

Task	Progress	Comments	Future Activities
MoU – Develop and finalise a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Health and MMR to provide legal powers to MMR as a CA	In progress	The Ministry of Health administers the Food (Fish Export Processing) Regulations 2006 in the Cook Islands under which the Competent Authority rests. The Secretary of Health has	Due to the pandemic, the focus for MoH has been Covid-19 and preparing the Cook Islands health system at the border and to cope with cases if they were to arrive. This has hindered any progress on the MOU. MMR

		<p>delegated authority to MMR, Offshore Fisheries Mr Andrew Jones as an authorised officer to carry out the responsibilities of the Competent Authority since 2013.</p> <p>Negotiations commenced in 2016 to transfer the Competent Authority functions from the Ministry of Health to the Ministry of Marine Resources via the Marine Resources Bill 2017. The section of the Bill pertaining to the Competent Authority was completed. A number of changes that brought about new legislation impacted on the MMR Bill (particularly the Marae Moana Act). The Bill did not proceed due to the need for MMR to include further matters in the Bill and is likely to be ready for cabinet in late 2021.</p> <p>In the meantime, preparation commenced to develop an interim Memorandum of Understanding between the Health and Marine Resources Ministry to formalize the arrangement between the parties regarding the</p>	<p>Secretary has been in discussion with the new Health Secretary, however as previously mentioned, this is not a priority for them at the moment.</p> <p>This work will be planned for 2021, however this may also lead in to 2022 workplan.</p> <p>MOH has appointed an MMR staff member to the Review Committee for all Food Safety legislation under their mandate, Negotiations re the Competent Authority will be carried out during that review commencing in late 2021.</p> <p>MMR proposes to include the Competent Authority under the MMR Bill. The tender process for a legal adviser to carry out this work July 2021 to June 2022 has commenced.</p>
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		Competent Authority functions, until the MMR Bill is passed into legislation.	
HACCP Strategy – Development of a national HACCP strategy	In progress	Draft policies for the CA have been developed. Internal discussions on these drafts will be the next step before going through the consultation phase with stakeholders.	Internal discussion has begun with relevant Competent Authority staff and a TOR is being developed to bring someone on to review and update these drafts before moving on to the next stage – Consultation process. This work has been planned for 2021; however this may also roll over in to 2022 due to COVID-19 restrictions. It is expected that the Legal Adviser for the MMR Bill will finalise the drafting of these policies
Implementation plan – Development of an implementation plan for the HACCP strategy, including completion of Part 2 training	Yet to start	This work has been moved to 2020/21. Initially the work was supposed to be implemented during 2019, however due to staffing capacity in 2019 and COVID-19 restrictions present (2020), completion of this work may be delayed to 2021.	This work will be planned for 2021. With the bubble between New Zealand and Rarotonga, we are hoping to get this part of the project in action.
Regulations – Develop and finalise regulations, standards, policies and a CA Checklist	In progress	Draft policies for the CA have been developed. Internal discussions on these drafts will be the next step before going through the consultation phase with stakeholders	Review current drafts to be circulated internally for commenting September 2021.
Calendar - Finalise Competent Authority training and	Yet to start	Initially the work was supposed to be implemented during	This may be pushed to the first half of 2022. An appropriate trainer has

implementation calendar for 2019		2019, however due limited staff capacity this was delayed to 2020. Furthermore, due to Covid 19, we are experiencing further delays.	been identified to carry out the work and logistics planning has commenced.
Awareness – Create awareness and education information packs for stakeholders and the general public on CA requirements, standards and legislation etc.	Yet to start	Internal discussions on this have begun within the Offshore Division.	Internal discussion on the awareness programme and info packs will commence in October 2021 for rollout in 2022.
Consultation – Hold consultations with stakeholders and the general public on CA work	Yes to start		This will be done either second half of 2021 or first half of 2022
Inspections – undertake inspections to train fisheries officers on HACCP CA requirements	In Progress	1 x Fisheries Officer (FO) participated in 2x inspections during 2019. The remaining FO to undertake sanitation inspections once travel is safe.	Further inspections have been put on hold until the Covid-19 travel restrictions have been lifted. The Cook Islands is not a port state so all inspections are made overseas.

Challenges faced

- Limited staffing capacity and competing priorities caused delays in progressing the work.
- The Cook Islands Government's plan of action regarding the COVID-19 pandemic this year has seen the Health Ministry's focus taken up in preparing and activating plans regarding the pandemic.
- Border closures internationally have hampered inspections, including for training purposes.

Way forward

Cook Islands have requested to carry over the funds for an additional year.

B. Improving the Participation and engagement in international fisheries forums

As part of its capacity building and succession planning initiatives, MMR will be implementing a series of training sessions to engage and prepare staff to participate in regional fisheries meetings. This proposal complements other initiatives MMR is undertaking to support professional development, including working with other Ministries training programs such as diplomatic protocols and negotiation, to ensure staff is adequately trained before venturing into

international meetings to represent the Cook Islands.

Training modules will include:

- International fisheries arrangements – hard and soft law
- Regional fisheries management organisations and regional fisheries organisations in the Pacific
- Governance, structure and procedural engagement
- Relationships between Pacific regional fisheries organisations and WCPFC
- Decision-making processes and implementation requirements
- Project – specific research topic relating to Pacific engagement in RFMOs / international fisheries arrangements

Objective

To develop the professional capacity of MMR staff, and related agencies, to ensure the effective participation of the Cook Islands in international fisheries meetings, in particular the WCPFC.

Project Update

Task	Progress	Comments	Future Activities
Develop a Tender for proposals to carry out the content development and delivery of the training.	In progress	<p>A tender according to the CI Gov procurement policy was created in early 2020.</p> <p>Due to COVID-19 and the closure of Cook Islands Borders in March 2020, the scope of the Tender as written became difficult to carry out.</p> <p>A review of the scope of works was conducted and it was resolved that the project be split into two components: Content Development first and then Delivery as better options for the methods of delivery of training became available.</p> <p>In accordance with the CI Govt Procurement Policy, the option to seek</p>	<p>The Content development stage of the project is completed</p> <p>Given the restrictions on travel brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, alternate methods for training delivery have been considered and are under negotiation.</p> <p>.</p> <p>Subject to the final development of alternate delivery methods, the project is still on track to be completed in 2021.</p> <p>It is planned that two cohorts of participants will receive the training over a two week period at separate intervals.</p>

		<p>quotations was implemented and a Terms of Reference for Content Development circulated to eligible consultants on and offshore.</p> <p>Quotes have been received and are currently being scrutinized by the MMR tender/quotes team to make the final recommendation to the MMR Secretary.</p> <p>The Content Delivery phase is expected to commence by the end of July 2020 and be completed by October 2020.</p>	
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Challenges faced

- The Cook Islands Government's plan of action regarding the COVID-19 pandemic this year has caused MMR to re-design the project to include possibilities for a mixed mode of delivery. As the Border restriction continue to remain in place, splitting the project into two components became the best option for progressing the project.

Way forward

- Cook Islands has requested to carry over the funds for an additional year.

II. JTF PROGRESS REPORT FROM PALAU

Domestic Tuna Market Development Project

Overview

The Palau National Marine Sanctuary Act (PNMS) has come into full implementation as of January 1, 2020. The Act designated an 80% no-take zone as a marine protected area and reserves a 20% fishing zone to allow sustainable fishing to occur, maintain existing regional and international obligations of the Republic of Palau, and promote local food security. The latest law amendments made to the PNMS focused mainly on the 20% fishing zone.

However, this proposal seeks interests in a particular provision. This provision is found under Section 6.18, which is Restrictions on Commercial Export.

With the newly implemented Act, it is important that the gathering of information of the targeted species (tuna and tuna-like species) and the country's total fish demand (including export, which is subject to the Minister's discretion) are documented to understand the overall structure of the market. The information collected will be built upon existing data collection of fish stocks that contributes to a continuing effort of a regional research project focusing on the status of important tuna and tuna-like species. It is feasible to include additional data requirements with the existing data collection system to capture the allocation of fish in the market and the consumption patterns of the species of interest. Information on fish marketing and consumption trends are necessary to understand the market's sensitivity to changes in supply and demand, prices, and incomes. The availability of such information will assist law makers and fisheries managers to make effective decisions to reinforce sustainable fishing, reassure food security of Palau, understand the dynamics of a newly introduced market, and maintain healthy stock levels of tuna and tuna-like species.

Objectives

- I. To understand the structure of the market by establishing an enhanced data collection system;
- II. To understand catch landings by fishing vessels and;
- III. To inform and advise future management decisions.

Status/Current Update:

The initial period of the Project was delayed due to COVID-19 and project extension was requested as a result. Although some of the project objectives are not met at the moment, the main purpose of the Project was uninterrupted by the circumstances of COVID-19. An enhanced data collection system to understand Palau's fishery was established and data has been collected since. Additional supplementing information was collected to reflect the market system since the full implementation of Palau National Marine Sanctuary (PNMS,) which aimed at analyzing BOFI's sales and market structure.

Since January 2020, there has been only two fishing vessels from two companies, Pacific Fresh Tuna Company (PFTC) and Kuniyoshi Fishing Company (KFC). However, PFTC ceased its fishing activities only a month after it started operations in January. KFC started fishing and remained the only fishing company landing catches in Palau throughout 2020. The total catch of both fishing vessels totaled in 28,808.95 kg with PFTC accounting for only 1.7% of the total catch as a result of a month's worth of fishing activities. KFC accounts for the remaining 98.3% of the total catch throughout the 11-months period. For this reason, the report will only focus on the annual catch landings and species composition of KFC's catch. Figure 1 shows KFC's annual catch. It shows a general trend of increasing catch from February to September then a sudden decline of catch in November then a slight increase in December.

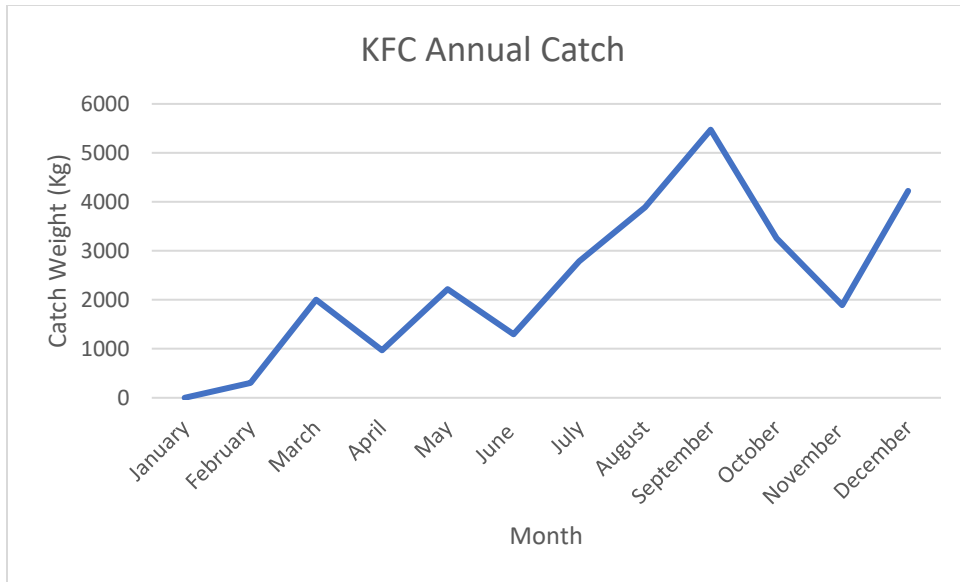


Figure 1: KFC's Annual Catch from February to December 2020

The majority of the total annual catch is tuna with bigeye as the most catch with a total weight of 11,351 kg and YFT with a total of 10,163 kg. Tuna accounted for 75% of KFC's total catch (Figure 3), with the remaining species composed of: 14% swordfish, 3% black marlin, 3% sailfish, 2% pacific blue marlin, 2% others, and 1% blue marlin.

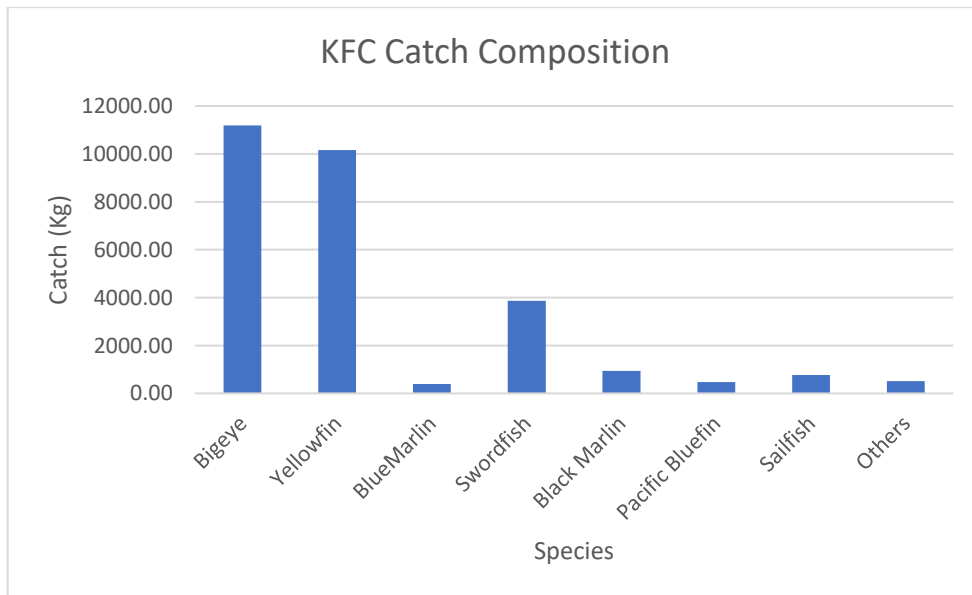


Figure 2: KFC's Catch Composition from February to December 2020

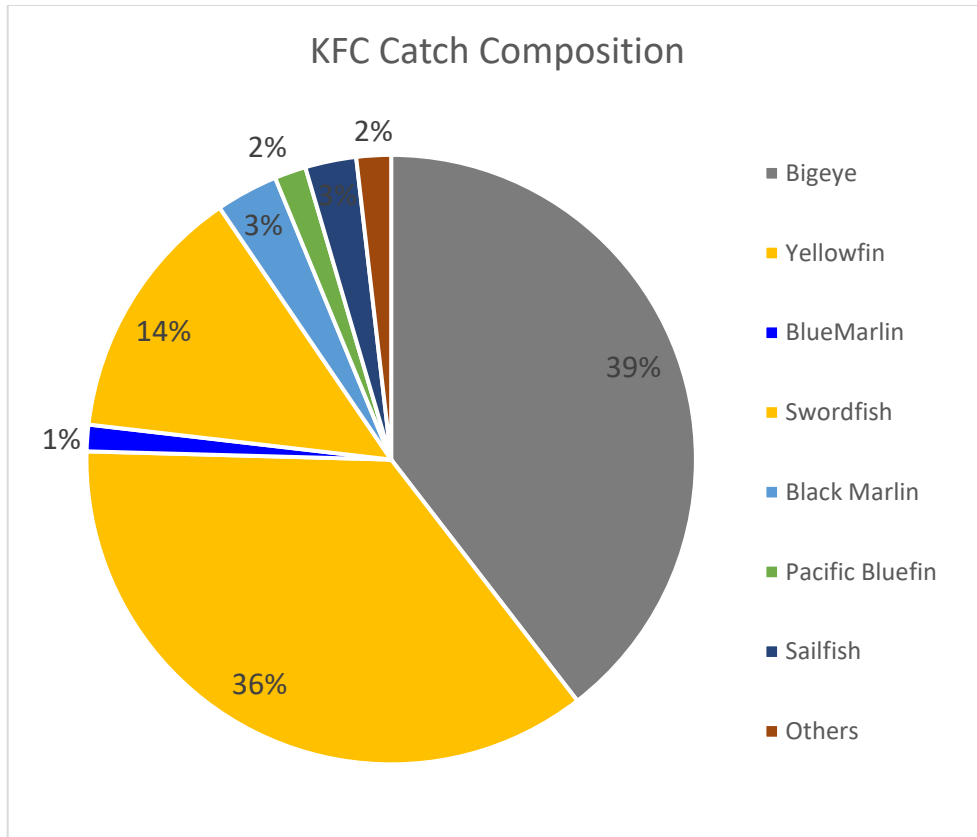
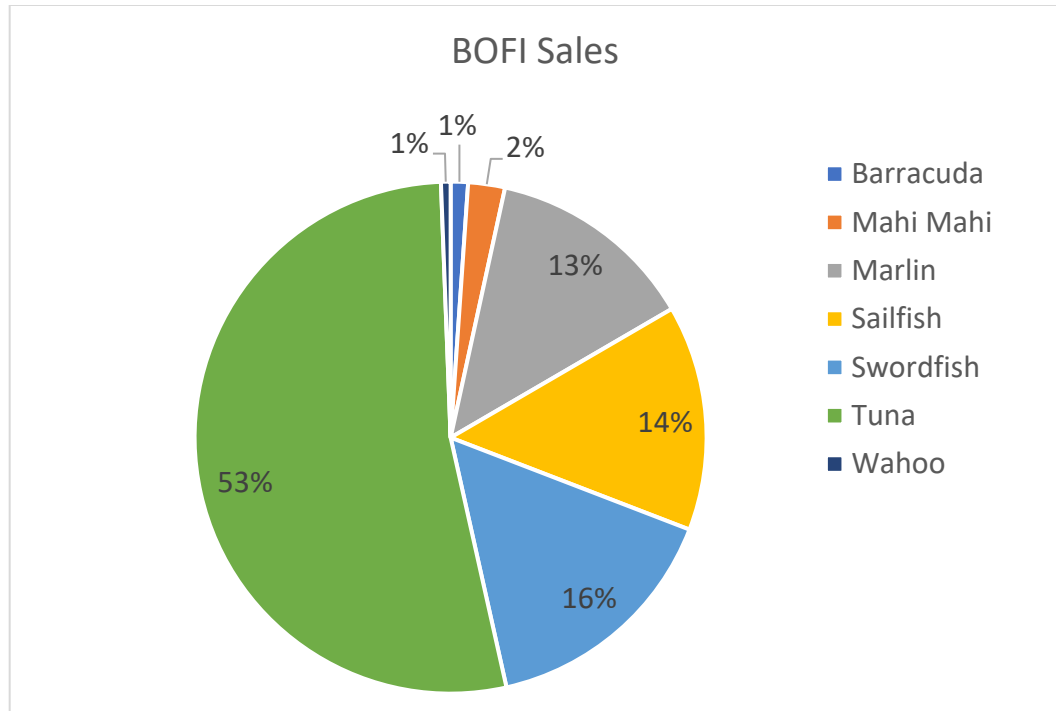


Figure 3: KFC Catch Composition by percentage

The Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment, and Tourism (MNRET) contracted its rights to buy 10% of pelagic longline catches to Belau Offshore Fishers Inc. (BOFI), a Member-based marketplace, buyer, and seller. With the enhanced data collection system, BOFI's sales data based on the 10% purchasing right was collected and analyzed (some still to be analyzed). Majority of BOFI's sales is tuna, accounting for 53% of the total sales.



Constraints and Ways forward:

Palau is currently facing constraints due to the COVID-19. Although Palau currently does not have positive COVID-19 cases, precautions still remain in place until further notice. Such precautions have limited mass gatherings which have hindered our proposed work to conduct workshops and trainings on tuna handling and fishing methods. However, other approaches (e.g. virtual training) are taken into consideration to carry on project activities as planned.

There is still data to be analyzed such as the market type and demand preference. BOFI is still to populate its newly launched database system so there is not enough data manually entered to be analyzed. But until then, there should be enough data collected and analyzed for the final report. Efforts are being in place to organize and schedule virtual training/workshop on fish handling and fishing techniques. A detailed financial report will also be included with the final project report.

III. JTF PROGRESS REPORT FROM TUVALU

High Seas Boarding and Inspection

A. Overview

Tuvalu’s Patrol Boat HMTSS Te Mataili has been listed in the WCPFC as an authorized inspection vessel, however has yet to participate in high seas boarding and inspection (HSBI) activities. With intentions to commence HSBI, there is a need to provide the relevant training to authorized officers. Such training is of great importance as Tuvalu EEZ is adjacent to two major high seas areas namely high seas pocket 3 and a long strip of pocket of high seas to the

east of our EEZ. These are major fishing grounds for PS and LL fleets and suspected in-zone incursions is on the rise. Extending the Patrol Boats presence will improve surveillance coverage and deter IUU practices in these areas.

The intended trainees are well versed with boarding and inspection procedures within the EEZ as authorized officers under the Marine Resources Act 2006, however require additional training to ensure the requirements outlined in CMM 2006-08 are met, when HSBI activities commence. The training will enable trainees to re-familiarize and understand relevant provisions in CMM 2006-08, review standard operating procedures, and its practical application in the WCPF Convention area.

B. Project Objectives

- To enhance the capacity of fisheries and Police Maritime personnel to conduct High Seas Boarding Inspections in the High Seas in accordance with WCPFC Boarding and Inspection Procedures (CMM 2006-08)
- To ensure enforcement officers fully understand the HSBI procedures and the application of the CMM 2006-08 in the WCPF Convention area.

C. Status/Update

2018

- The department conducted one (1) HSBI training with the intention that it will be funded under JTF. More than 10 staff from fisheries and maritime police participated in. The training was led by the 2 trainers from NZ.
- Ultimately the government of New Zealand (who also provided the 2 trainers) agreed to pay for all the costs except for ID card printing machine.
- The department of fisheries later procured one ID printing machine using JTF money.



2019

- No activity and the department requested for an extension with expectation that further HSBI training will take place in 2020.
- Tuvalu received its new patrol boat with a much bigger crewing capacity

- Recruitment of additional crew for the new patrol boat

2020

- COVID19 pandemic struck and the ban on travel worldwide also came into effect and remained in place all throughout
- No activity due to COVID19 pandemic, hence Tuvalu requested a further extension

2021

- Travel restrictions and COVID19 on-going
- No activity likely to occur this year, Tuvalu wishes to request for further extension until borders opens up and international travel resumes
- To date there is as much as \$14,513.81 fund balance

D. Constraints/Challenges:

- COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions have disabled the ability of external trainers to travel to Tuvalu to conduct the HSBI Training.
- HSBI involves doing some extensive practical exercises thus would be not be ideal to conduct this type of training virtually or through Zoom platform.

E. Way Forward

As HSBI cannot be delivered in any other form give the practical nature of such training, perhaps the most sensible thing to do now is to halt all trainings until things get back to normal. Therefore, Tuvalu wishes to request a further extension of this project until restrictions on travel is lifted and that external trainers can come to Tuvalu.