



TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE
Seventeenth Regular Session
22 September – 28 September 2021

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE WCPFC RECORD OF FISHING VESSELS

WCPFC-TCC17-2021-RP05

15 September 2021

Paper by the Secretariat

Purpose

1. This paper presents the annual summary of information from the WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels (RFV) and reports on the operation of the RFV for the consideration by TCC17.

Background

2. The RFV was established pursuant to Article 24 paragraphs 4–7 of the WCPF Convention. The *Conservation and Management Measures on the WCPFC Record of Fishing Vessels and Authorization to Fish* (CMM 2018-06) and the *Standards, Specifications and Procedures for the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Record of Fishing Vessels* (RFV SSPs) (CMM 2014-03) regulate how the RFV operates. This report provides the annual summary of information¹

3. The Secretariat maintains a RFV on behalf of Commission members, showing all vessels flagged to CCMs that are authorised to fish in the Convention Area beyond each CCM’s area of national jurisdiction.

4. The RFV is publicly available on the WCPFC website: <http://www.wcpfc.int/record-fishing-vessel-database> and is automatically updated as members make changes to their data. A range of summary reports can be created for viewing or printing as pdf files. Users can apply filters to reports e.g. to identify charter vessels or those vessels authorized to tranship on the high seas². For the most up-to-date summary statistics, refer to <http://www.wcpfc.int/vessels/charts/types>.

5. All historical RFV information is considered “public domain information” in accordance with the WCPFC data access rules and procedures. The full RFV of active and historical data is periodically updated and is available for downloading from the WCPFC website in accord with decisions of WCPFC14 (WCPFC Summary Report paragraph 428) (<https://www.wcpfc.int/vessels>)

6. This paper reports on information from the RFV and on its operation and covers:

- Key points from the RFV annual report;
- Summary of annual information in the RFV as at 30 July 2021:

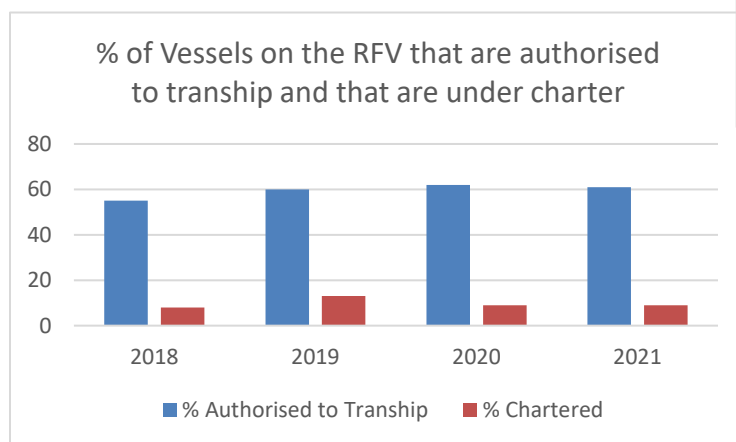
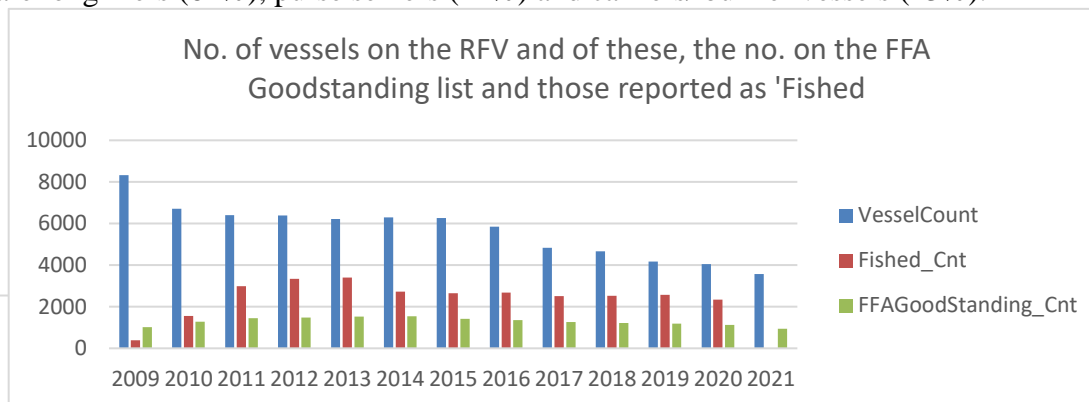
¹ CMM 2018-06 paragraph 15 and CMM 2014-03 paragraph 14

² Flag CCMs RFV updates for charter notifications and high seas transshipment authorisations are to be treated as public domain data (WCPFC11 Summary Report para 500) and has been publicly available on the RFV website since 2015

- *Overview of vessels authorised on the RFV;*
- *Completeness of RFV data fields including IMO number requirement (effective 1 April 2020);*
- *Overview of vessel activity authorised on the RFV: Vessels authorised to tranship;*
- *Overview of vessel activity authorised on the RFV: Vessels under charter; and*
- *Overview of vessel activity authorised on the RFV: CCM charter notifications and recording charters on the RFV*
- **Reporting under the RFV:**
 - *Fish did not fish; and*
 - *A review of RFV implementation under the Compliance Monitoring Scheme.*

KEY POINTS FROM THE RFV ANNUAL REPORT

- Of the 3,435 vessels on the RFV on 30 July 2021, 88% are longliners (61%), purse seiners (14%) and carriers/ bunker vessels (13%).
- The number of vessels on the RFV has progressively declined since 2009 (6,049 to 3,503 in 2020).
- Proportions of the main vessel types are similar between 2014-2021, averaging 65% for longliners, 13% purse seiners and 11% carriers/bunkering vessels.



longliners (67%), purse seiners (19%) and carriers/bunkering vessels (8%). Figures for 2020 and 2018 are generally similar but in 2019 there was an increase to 526 (13%) vessels under charter.

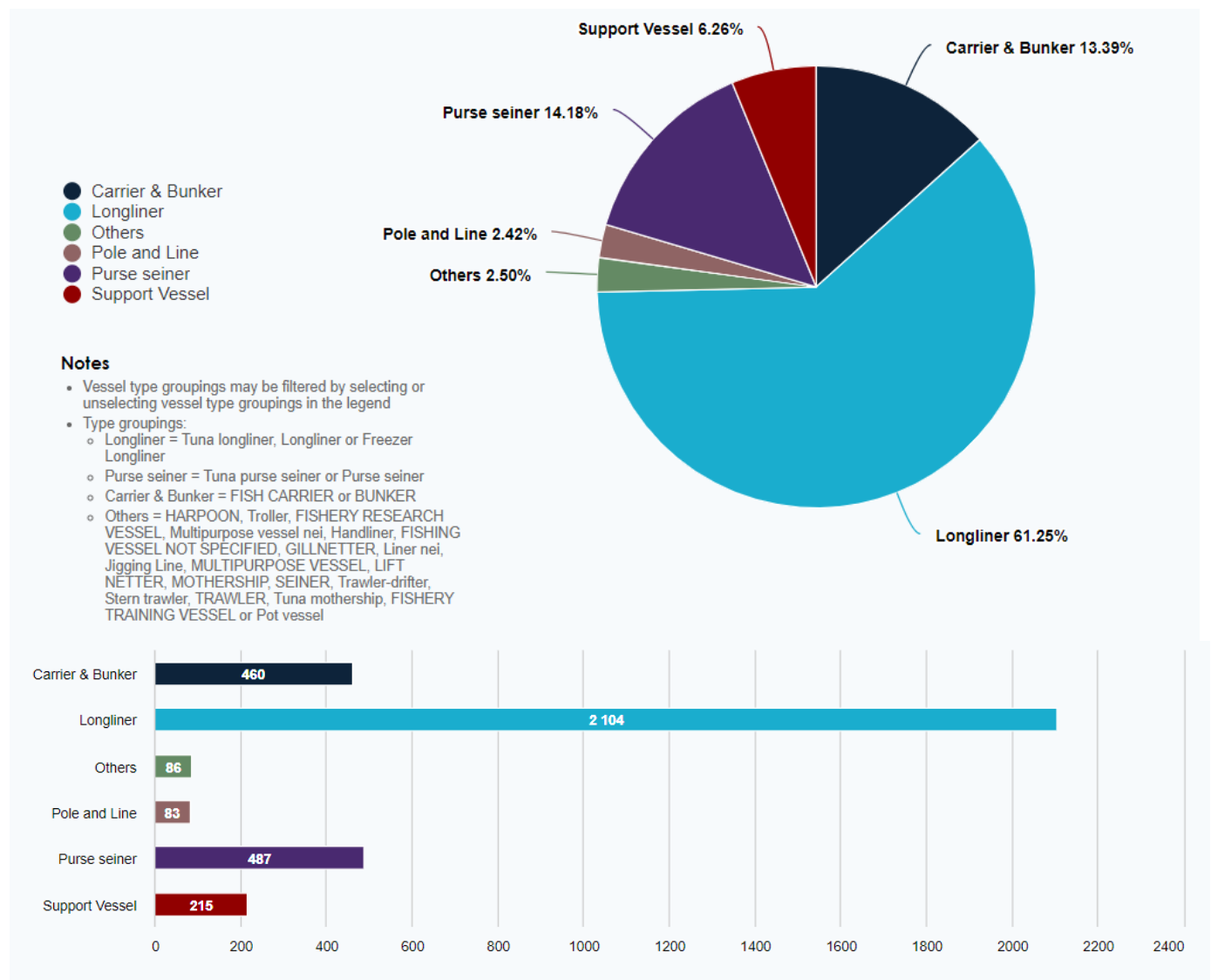
- As the number of vessels on the RFV has decreased, the proportion of vessels reported as 'Fished' has increased but does not reflect a marked increase in the number of active vessels.
- In 2021, 2110 vessels (61%) were listed as authorised for high seas transhipment; mainly longliners (86%) and carriers/bunkering vessels (9 %). These figures have remained stable over 2021 and 2020.
- In 2021, 317 (9%) of vessels were listed as under charter; mainly longliners (67%), purse seiners (19%) and carriers/bunkering vessels (8%). Figures for 2020 and 2018 are generally similar but in 2019 there was an increase to 526 (13%) vessels under charter.
- Not all charters that may be shown on the RFV by the flag state have been formally notified to the Secretariat by the chartering CCM.
- All CCMS submitted fish/did not fish reports on or before 1 July 2021 with 15 CCMs submitting reports before June which greatly assists the Secretariat's ability to review and resolve any inconsistencies with WCPFC VMS data.
- Implementation of RFV requirements by CCMs initially posed challenges but has progressively improved since 2013.

Summary of annual information in the RFV as at 30 July 2021

Overview of vessels authorised on the RFV

7. There are 3,435 vessels on the RFV that are authorised by their member flag state to fish³ in the Convention Area (refer Figure 1). Longliners make up 61% of these vessels, purse seiners (14%), and carriers/ bunker vessels (13%); collectively 88% of all vessels on the RFV.

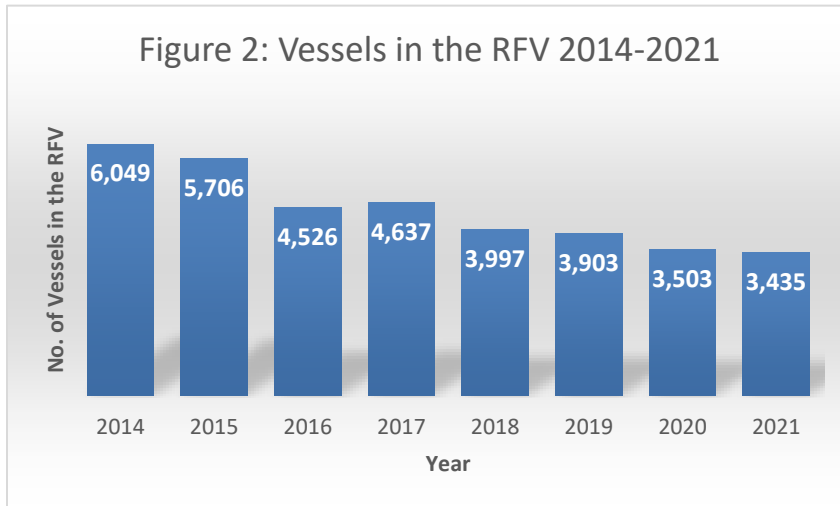
Figure 1: Breakdown of the 3,435 vessels authorised on the RFV as at 30 July 2021



³ As defined in Convention Article 1(d) states “fishing” means: (i) searching for, catching, taking or harvesting fish; (ii) attempting to search for, catch, take or harvest fish; (iii) engaging in any other activity which can reasonably be expected to result in the locating, catching, taking or harvesting of fish for any purpose; (iv) placing, searching for or recovering fish aggregating devices or associated electronic equipment such as radio beacons; (v) any operations at sea directly in support of, or in preparation for, any activity described in subparagraphs (i) to (iv), including transshipment; (vi) use of any other vessel, vehicle, aircraft or hovercraft, for any activity described in subparagraphs (i) to (v) except for emergencies involving the health and safety of the crew or the safety of a vessel.

8. RFV data for 2014 - 2021⁴ in Figure 2 shows a progressive decline in the number of listed vessels. However, the proportions of the main vessel types has stayed relatively stable:

- Longliners - between 60% - 70% of listed vessels (average 65%);
- Purse seiners - between 12% -14% of listed vessels (average 13%); and
- Carriers and bunkering vessels - between 9% and 13% (average 11%) of listed vessels.



9. Vessels from three flag states (China, Japan and Chinese Taipei) represent around 44% of the vessels authorised to operate in the Convention Area in 2020. This is similar to figures in recent reporting years (refer Annex 1 A).

10. The majority of authorised vessels were built within the last 30 years (refer Annex 1 B). The Secretariat

notes anecdotal information suggests some data on ‘where the vessel was built’ may reflect e.g. the year a vessel was reflagged or refitted rather than when first constructed.

Completeness of RFV data fields including IMO number requirement (effective 1 April 2020)

11. CMM 2018-06 paragraph 6 requires CCMs to provide information for each vessel they enter into the RFV. In accord with the RFV SSPs (CMM 2014-03), this information must be complete and meet the structure and format specifications of Attachment 1 including all identified “minimum data requirements”. CMM 2014-03 Footnote 3 clarifies that, although vessels with only the minimum required data will be added to, and maintained on, the RFV, responsible CCMs are still required to meet all obligations to provide all the data required under the WCPFC’s applicable conservation and management measures.

12. The required information, as well as a current evaluation of the completeness of the RFV fields by CCM, can be viewed by CCMs on the secure CCM-pages of the website. A summary table is shown in Annex 1 C. Some data fields show gaps such as freezer and fish hold related information as well as some fields defining aspects of the vessel’s authorisation. The RFV SSPs guidance on fields clearly envisages some data fields, including those that are identified as minimum standards, may be blank in certain circumstances e.g. authorisation periods for vessels that do not fish beyond waters of national jurisdiction or for vessels that do not have freezer capacity. For this reason, 100% completion of all fields is not anticipated.

13. At WCPFC15 the Commission agreed to expand the requirements for IMO numbers. From 1 April 2020, flag CCMs were to ensure all motorized inboard fishing vessels of less than 100

⁴ As reported in previous years Annual Reports on the RFV

GRT (or 100 GRT) down to a size of 12 meters in length overall (LOA) that are authorized to fish in the Convention Area beyond the flag CCM's area of national jurisdiction, have an IMO or LR issued.⁵ This requirement was not included in the RFV SSPs identified minimum data requirements at that time.

14. On 30 March 2020, the Secretariat sent an email to flag CCMs of this new requirement and the need for them to update the RFV for each of their vessels to either provide the IMO or LR, or to indicate that this requirement was 'Not applicable'. By 1 April 2020, there were 273 vessels from 15 CCMs that had no IMO or LR listed and no clarifying 'Not Applicable' in the data field in the RFV. On 30 October 2020 a further email was sent to seven (7) CCMs in relation to 180 vessels with no information in the IMO/LR data field in the RFV.

15. As of 31 July 2021, two CCMs had not responded in relation to 45 vessels. The other five CCMs have clarified the status of their vessels and, in some cases, updated the RFV to show 'Not applicable', an IMO/LR, or that the authorised area is limited to national waters. One CCM responded that this was not a minimum requirement and therefore not a priority at this time. At the time of writing, most CCMs have provided IMO numbers or identified the provision is not relevant to their vessel either in the RFV or via email.

16. Since coming into force in 2014, the implementation of the RFV SSPs and the reviews of RFV data completeness through the Compliance Monitoring Scheme, have continued to allow streamlining that has improved the operation of the RFV and its completeness.

Overview of vessel activity authorised on the RFV: Vessels authorised to tranship

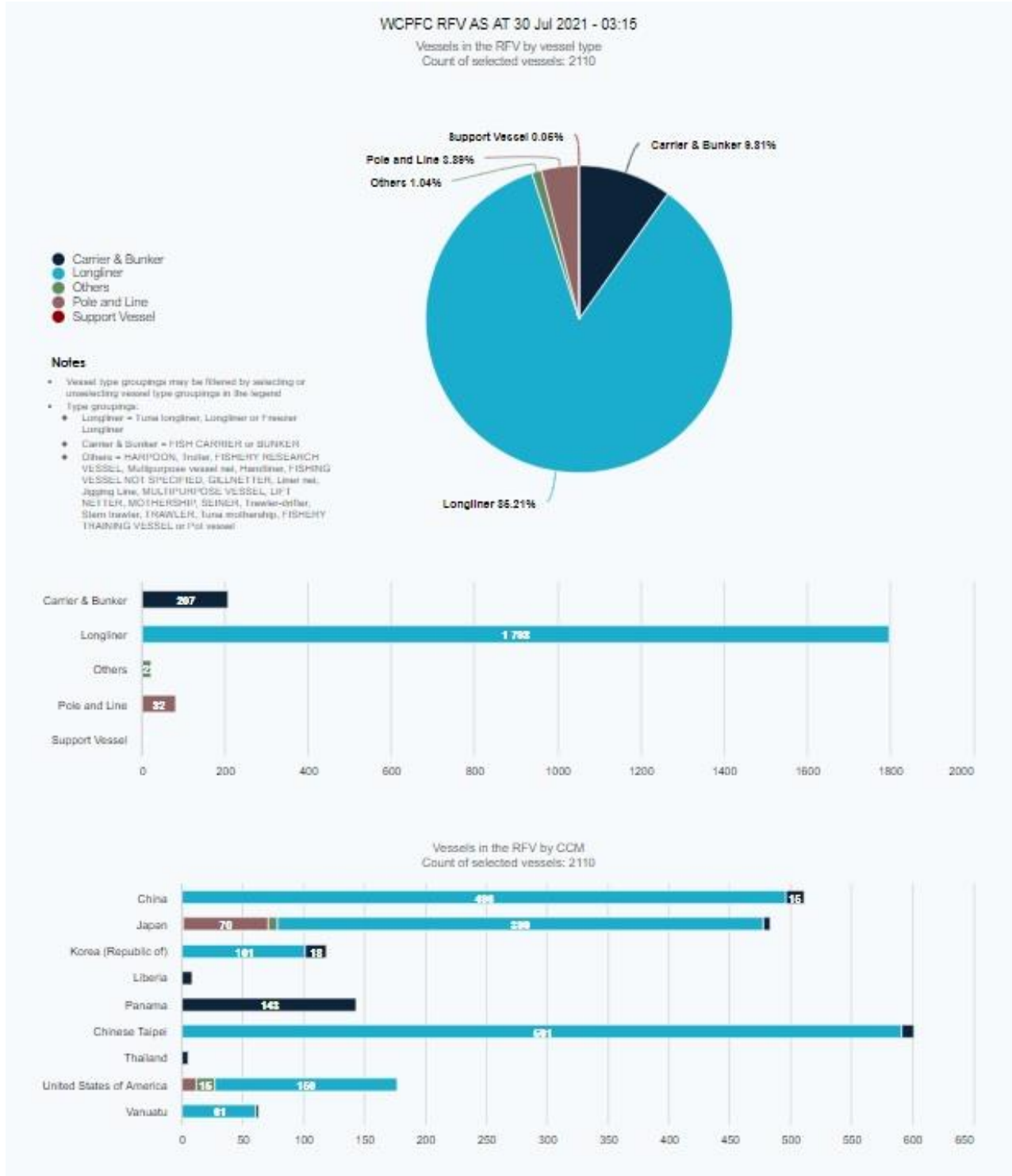
17. Transhipment on the high seas is prohibited for purse seine vessels. For any other type of vessel, high seas transhipments are prohibited without an authorisation (CMM 2009-06). The authorisation status is shown in the RFV.

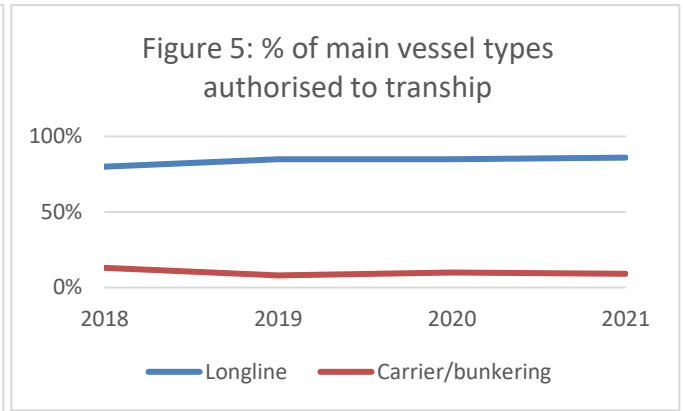
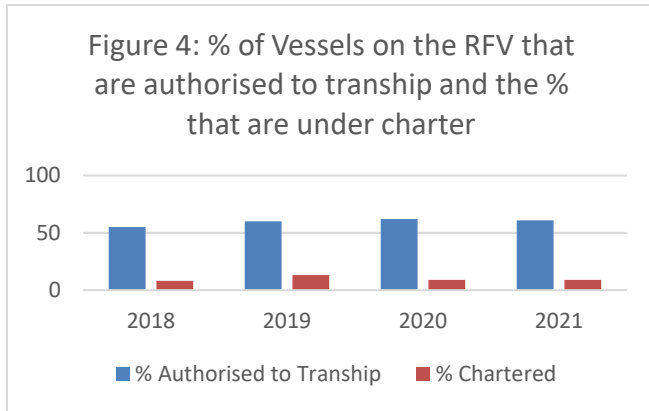
18. In accordance with Attachment 1 of CMM 2014 – 03, the flag CCM shows the vessel as authorised to tranship where they have made an affirmative determination under paragraph 37 of CMM 2019-06 and accordingly, have authorised the vessel to be used for transshipping highly migratory stocks (HMS) on the high seas in the Convention Area and show a currently valid authorisation.

19. Of the 3,435 vessels on the RFV on 30 July 2021, 2110 (61%) were listed as authorised for high seas transhipment (refer Figure 3 below). The number of vessels authorised for transhipment remained about the same in 2020 and 2019 but dropped to 55% in 2018 (refer Figure 4 on page 8).

⁵ CMM 2018-06 footnote 4

Figure 3: Number of vessels identified in the RFV by CCMs as authorised to tranship





20. Between 2018 and 2021 longliners made up 80%-86% of the vessels authorised to tranship. In 2018, carriers/bunkering vessels made up 13% of authorised vessels but dropped to 8-10% in 2019-2021 despite increases in the number of transhipments in both 2018 and 2019⁶. In 2020, COVID-19 led to reductions in the number of transhipment events but this has not affected authorisation levels (refer Figure 5).

21. COVID-19 intersessional decisions⁷ relating to at-sea transhipments for purse seine vessels that have been in effect since May 2020 have had some effect on the numbers of purse seine vessels authorised for transhipment on the RFV. Two CCMs have listed a combined total of 46 purse seine vessels that are authorised for transhipment at sea on the RFV. Of these 46 purse seine vessels, 15 were authorised after the Commissions COVID-19 decision took effect in late May 2020.

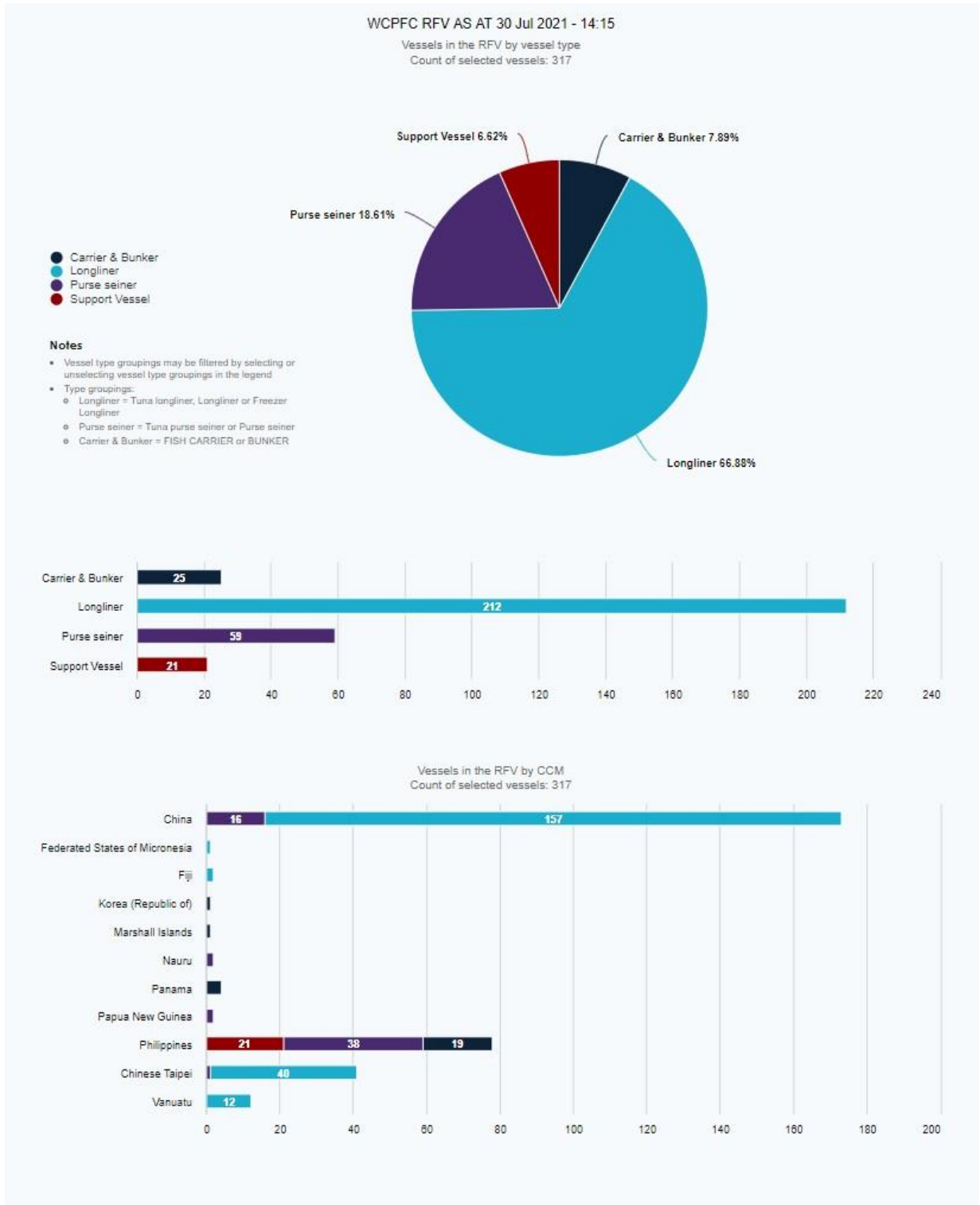
Overview of vessel activity authorised on the RFV: Vessels under charter

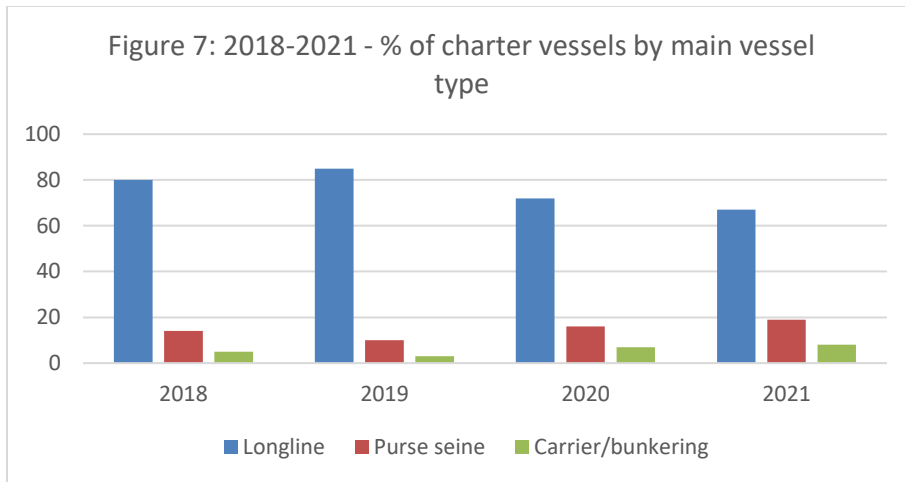
22. Of the 3,435 vessels on the RFV on 30 July 2021, 317 (9%) were listed as being chartered with the main vessels types longliners (67%), purse seiners (19%) and carriers/bunkering vessels (8%) (refer Figure 6). The figures for 2020 and 2018 are roughly similar but in 2019 there was an increase to 526 under charter (around 13 % of vessels on the RFV). (Refer Figure 7)

⁶ WCPFC-TCC17-2021-RP05 and WCPFC-TCC16-2020-RP05

⁷ WCPFC-TCC17-2021-14 and WCPFC-TCC16-2020-08

Figure 6: Number of vessels identified in the RFV by CCMs as ‘Under Charter’





Overview of vessel activity authorised on the RFV: CCM charter notifications and recording charters on the RFV

23. CCMs are reminded that in accordance with Attachment 1 of CMM 2014-03, the charter information relates to vessels which are notified as chartered under CMM 2019-08 or CMM 2018-06 paragraph 42. This also includes notifications under paragraph 9 of CMM 2018-01/2020-01.

24. The Secretariat has observed instances where flag CCMs are entering data into the charter-fields in the RFV for vessels which have **not** been formally notified to the Secretariat as vessels chartered by a chartering CCM under CMM 2019-08 (or its predecessor CMM). In addition, some formally notified charters are yet to be updated on the RFV by the flag CCM. As at 30 July 2021, there were 317 vessels in the RFV listed as under charter (refer to Figure 8 on previous page), 193 of which had a current charter authorization period.

25. For the 2020 reporting year, as at 31 December 2020, the Secretariat had received 23 submissions from 7 Members and Participating Territories containing notifications or updates related to the Charter Notification Scheme by the chartering CCM for 2020. From these notifications, there were a total of 389 individual vessels (357 longliners, 32 purse seine vessels and 2 carrier vessels) that are notified under the Charter Notification Scheme during the 2020 calendar year. Twenty-nine (29) individual longline vessels were notified to have a charter application area of “EEZ only”, and the remaining vessels were either notified or inferred to have a charter application area of “EEZ and high seas”. In addition, there were eight (8) individual longline vessels and two (2) carrier vessels, that are notified under the Charter Notification Scheme for 2020 calendar year and beyond. According to the RFV records there were 439 vessels with an authorization charter period for 2020 or beyond.

26. The Secretariat urges CCMs to check that they are using the charter fields correctly. The Secretariat’s anticipation is that a flag CCM would only update its vessels to ‘chartered’ on the RFV after receipt of advice of the charter notification has been received from the chartering CCM (CMM 2019-08).

CCM Reporting under the RFV

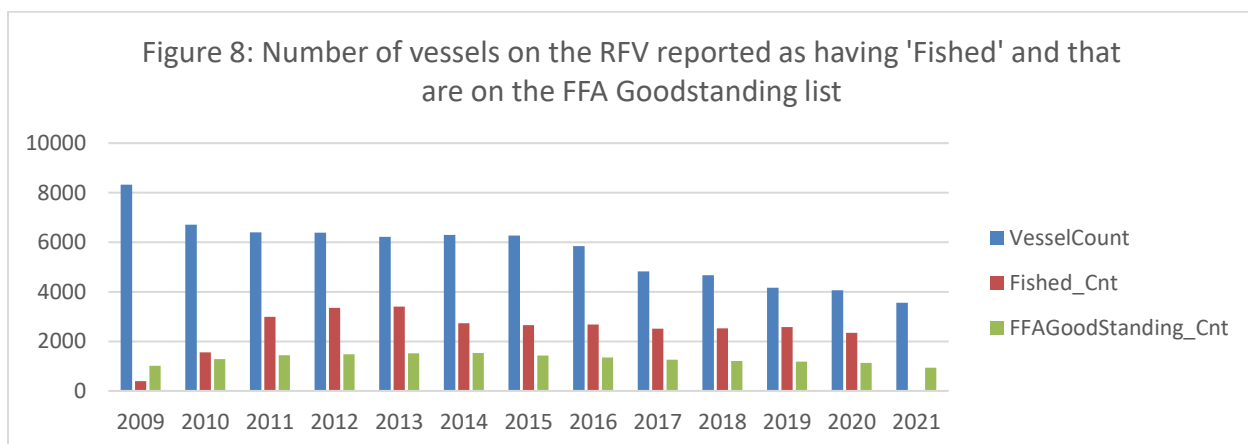
Fished/Did not fished Reporting

27. In support of the Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS), CMM 2018-06 paragraph 9 requires each CCM to identify a list of their flagged vessels in the RFV for the preceding calendar year and to indicate whether each vessel fished or did not fish for highly migratory fish stocks in the Convention Area beyond its area of national jurisdiction. This information is to be provided to the Executive Director before 1 July of each year to allow it to be integrated with the RFV and used as an input to⁸:

- the Secretariat’s review of the applicability of certain CMMs;
- support compliance reviews;
- support MCS analyses; and
- is used in preparing the draft CMR⁹.

28. On 28 January 2021, the Secretariat again sent relevant CCMs a preformatted Excel spreadsheet template listing their relevant vessels from the RFV. The aim is to simplify CCM completion of their fished/did not fish report in a format that also allows the Secretariat to automatically upload each report into the RFV with no manual data entry needed.

29. Fifteen CCMs submitted their reports before June with the remainder provided on or before 1 July 2021. The Secretariat appreciates the support of CCMs that were able to provide early reports. This allows more time for a review of this data against VMS reports and to resolve any inconsistencies with members, spreading out the flow of work for all over the months in advance of TCC.



30. Figure 8 summarises 2020 fished/did not fish reporting by CCMs in comparison to the total number of vessels listed on the RFV and on the FFA Goodstanding List between 2009 and 2021. Table 1 below summarises each CCMs fish/did not fish reports for 2020.

⁸ CMM 2014- 03 paragraph 13

⁹ Tasks required by CMM 2019-06 paragraph 22

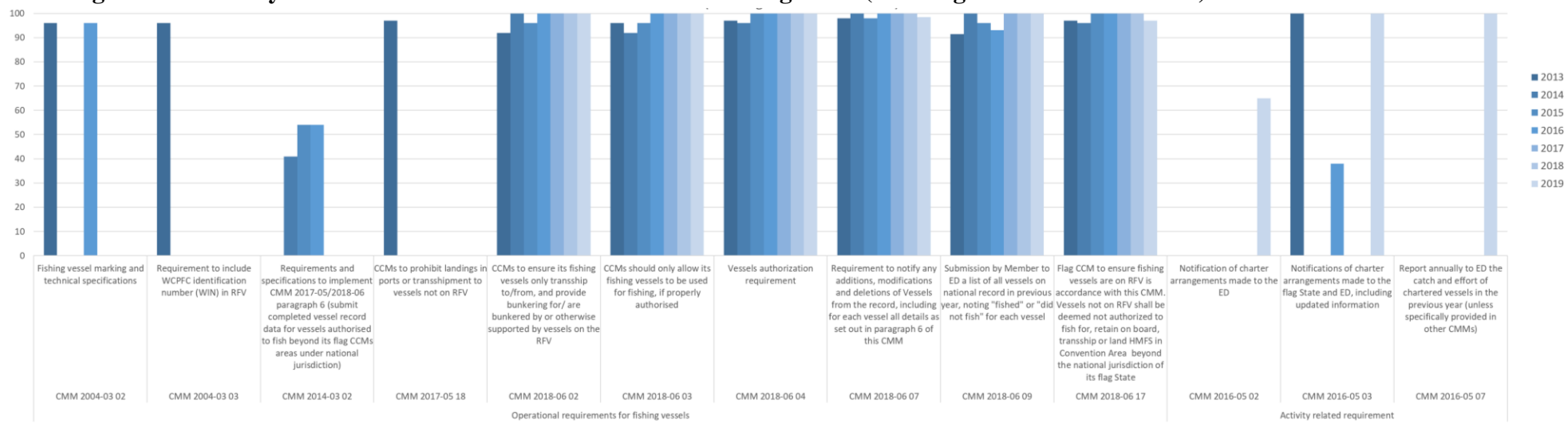
Table 1: Summary of CCM fished/did not fish reports for 2020 calendar year

2020			
Row Labels	VesselCount	Fished_Cnt	DidNotFish_Cnt
AU	56	4	52
CA	6	0	6
CK	25	19	6
CN	658	375	283
CW	6	1	5
EC	7	4	3
EU	85	5	80
FJ	70	34	36
FM	43	42	1
ID	22	0	22
JP	786	440	326
KI	12	12	0
KR	221	159	62
LR	22	2	20
MH	16	15	1
NC	24	0	24
NI	1	0	1
NR	16	16	0
NZ	4	2	2
PA	167	73	94
PF	82	0	82
PG	26	17	9
PH	344	249	95
SB	11	3	8
SV	4	2	2
TH	5	0	5
TO	1	0	1
TV	6	4	2
TW	1058	607	451
US	214	183	31
VU	77	71	6

Review of RFV implementation by applicable CCMs under the Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS) 2013 – 2019

31. Figure 9 provides an overview of the result of evaluation of RFV related CMMs¹⁰ under the CMS over the years. Implementation of RFV requirements initially posed challenges for CCMs, however, this has steadily improved since 2013. The RFV reporting requirements (CMM 2014-03) was reviewed through the CMS in the earlier years (2014 - 2016 activities), and at that time the outcome was that many CCMs had difficulties to complete all required data fields for each vessel the CCM has entered into the RFV.

Figure 9. Summary of CMR outcomes for RFV and Charter Obligations (covering 2013 - 2019 activities)



Recommendations

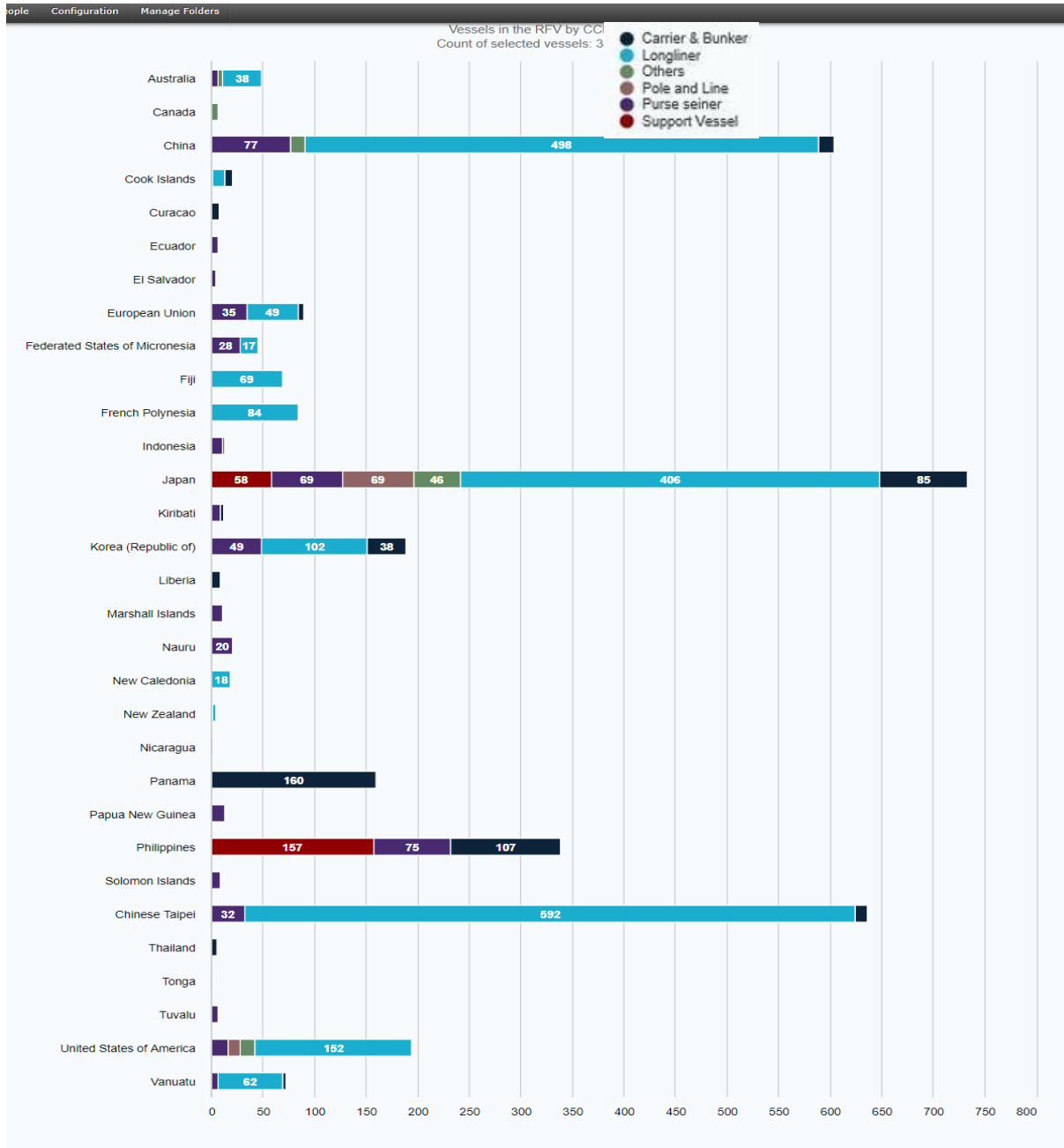
32. TCC17 is invited to consider and note this paper.

¹⁰ CMM 2004-03, CMM 2013-10 and CMM 2014-03

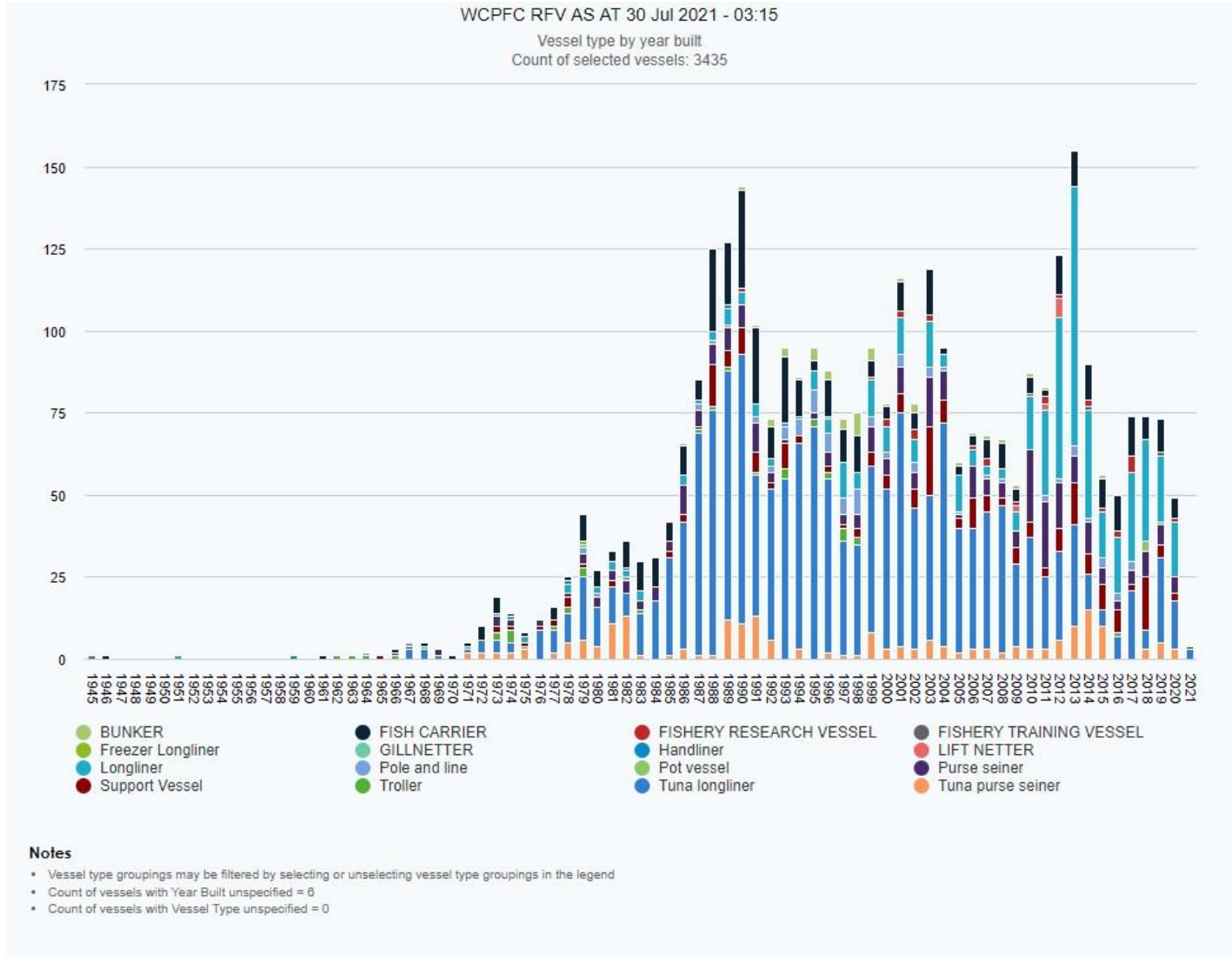
ANNEX 1

OVERVIEW OF VESSEL INFORMATION RELATING TO THE 3,435 VESSELS ON THE RFV AS AT 30 JULY 2021

A: Number of vessels by type and flag state on the RFV



B: Information entered in the RFV for year built



1 C: Completeness of information entered in the RFV

