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

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NIUE

COUNTRY FISHERIES REPORT – NIUE

Fisheries Division

Ministry of Natural Resources Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries Niue 2025

1. Abstract

Niue has not license any foreign fishing vessels for the past 6 years resulting in no catch to report for 2024. Our domestic artisanal fishers continues to provide for the restaurants, families and local markets but at an inconsistent rate. The yearly catch reduction due to poor catch has proven somewhat difficult at times to maintain this supply in terms of food security. Other factors contributed to the reduction of catches is due to shark depredation which significantly impacted fishermens gears and moral.

Below reflects back to how Niue once operate with our fish Processing plant up and running between 2005-2009 with and aspiration for one day perhaps to revive this important infrastructure.

2. Background

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

Taiwan and Cook Islands flagged vessels were those that were License by Niue to operate in our EEZ for 2018. These vessels were all based and offloaded in Samoa. Vessels flagged to Fiji were also License in the pass years.

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.

Niue's management of its artisanal fishery was improving steadily. As of the first quarter of 2016, a Fisheries data officer was dedicated to collect catch data all year round. However, this stopped from beginning 2018 to mid 2019 due to staff turnover once again.

As tourism is growing, so has the diversification of marine activities. Niue Fisheries is working alongside the Niue Ocean Wide project to set up management of Niue's newest and largest marine protected area. The area will encompass management for significantly important inshore and offshore habitats, species, fishing and non-fishing activities. Sports like game fisheries where catch are released may be permitted within this area but under license arrangement.

3. Annual Data Summary and Species Catch Distribution by Longline vessels from 2009-2019.

The longline total catch in Niue's EEZ in 2019 increased from the previous year (Table 1). This is due to the increase on the number of vessels and in turn the number of trips and effort subjected on Niue's offshore fishery. Albacore was the only species with a notable catch weight where the rest barely made 5% tonnes. However the reduction for albacore from the previous year was still very large at almost 80%. Yellowfin and bigeye follow with low catches.

Raised and unraised annual artisanal catch estimates in
mt

Method	BET	SKJ	YFT
raised	0	5.83	6.97
unraised	0	0.17	0.22

Percentage of the artisanal tuna ACE associated with each of the key
species

Method	BET	SKJ	YFT
raised	0	45.55	54.45
unraised	0	43.59	56.41

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Table1. Annual catch estimates in Niue's EEZ. Data Source: Operational (log sheet) catch/effort data, unraised.

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

Whale watching is on the rise, with interested locals in taking up the initiative in taking out tourist on charters, due to the popularity and migrating of whales during the June-September window.

7. Disposal of catch

. 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 with no immediate forecast to reactivate. 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.

A boat and canoe launching site located to southern side of the island was also utilised during this time to offload catch from vessels due to port being rough and unsafe for usual offloading operation.

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.

One of the long term partnerships is with the Niue Ocean Wide (NOW) project to set up management of Niue's newest and largest marine protected area. The area will encompass management for significantly important inshore and offshore habitats, species, fishing and non-fishing activities. Work is already underway with NOW project for surveillance tools to be utilised for monitoring parts if not of the MPA. There is also ongoing negotiation with the High Seas Allocation for Niue.

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 identified and appointed to recommence collecting of data 4 days per week. In some cases including Saturday to cover Fishing competitions held by various Communities. 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 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.

Tuna and Shark tagging was also done last year 2019 in collaboration with NOW Project and 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. At this same time, the Pacific Community undertook finfish and invertebrates surveys with Niue Fisheries staff.