



Pacific Tuna Tagging Project

WCPFC-SC21 Steering Committee 2025

Fisheries and Ecosystem Monitoring and Analysis

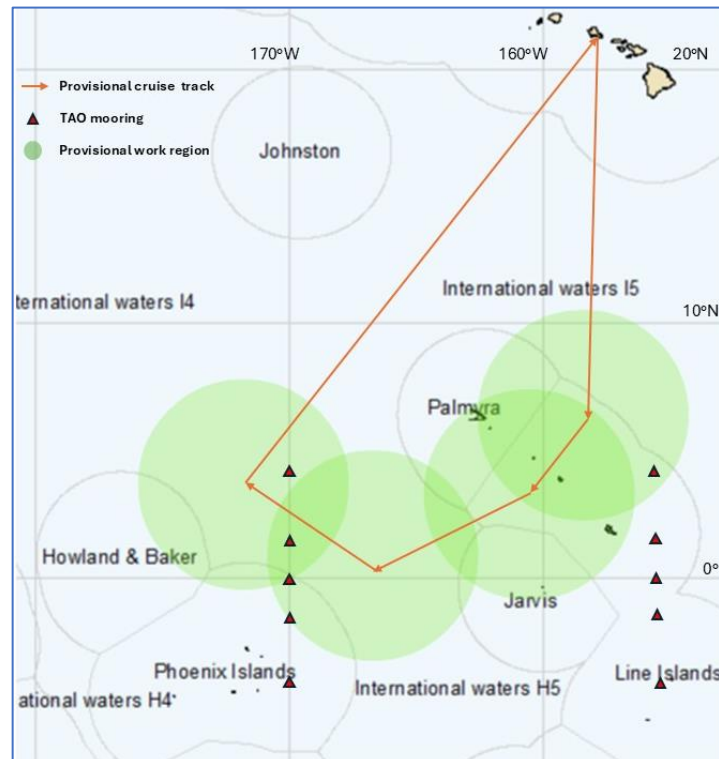
SPC

Adoption of Agenda

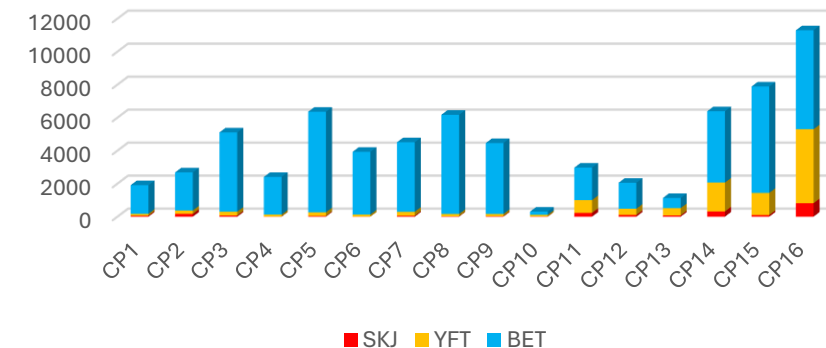
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2.1 2025 CP17 Cruise

- 45-day cruise onboard Gutsy Lady 4
(25th June – 10th August)
- Scientist team : 3 SPC and 1 contractor
- Crew: 8 (including the Captain)
- Target: 6000 CTs, supplement the Marine Specimen Bank with 300 fish target
- Fishing permits for Ki, Jarvis & Palmyra eez



Tag Deployments by Species

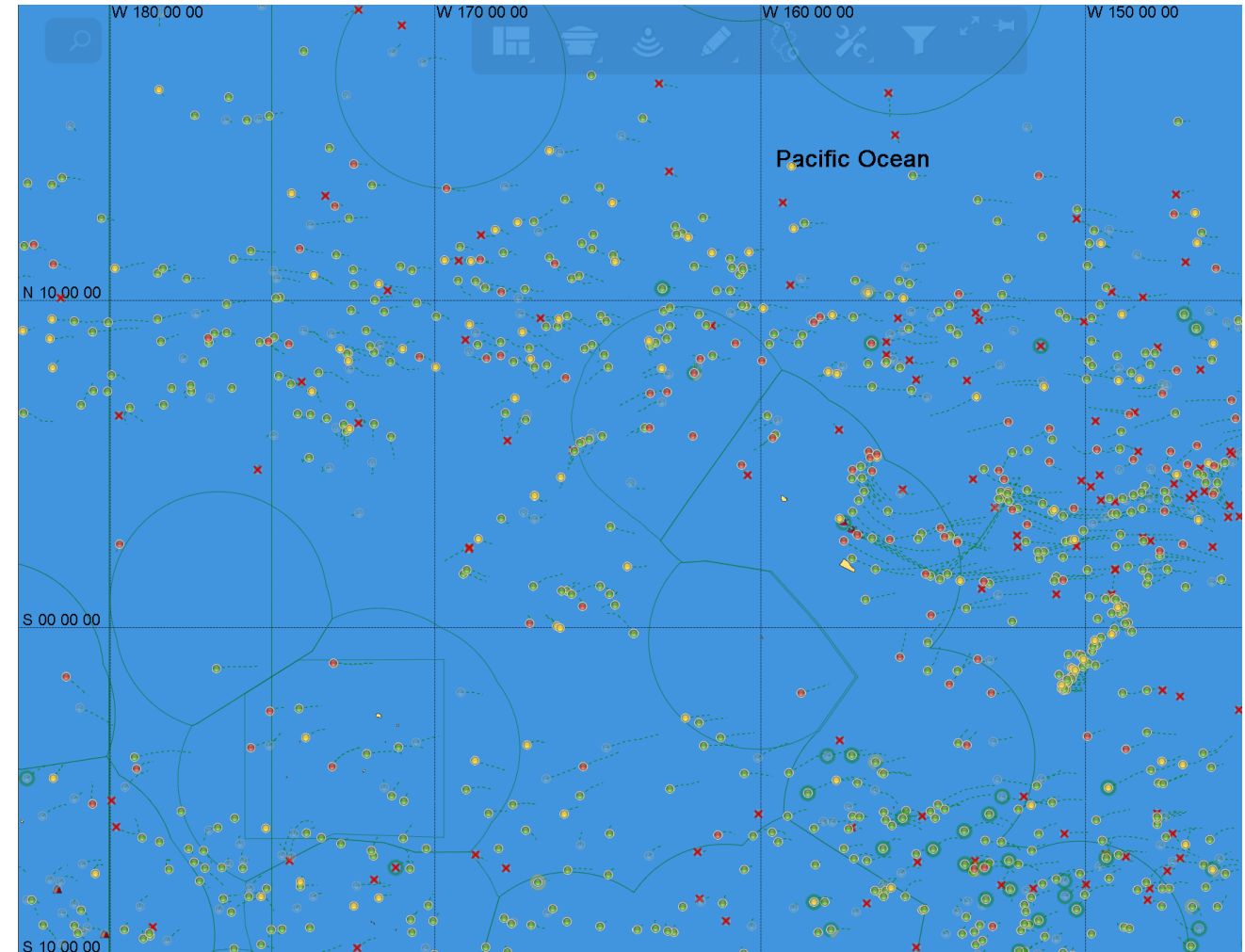


2.1 2025 CP17 Cruise

Currently over 1000 drifting FAD buoys are shared from 3 separate purse seine fishing groups: American Tuna Boat Association (USA), Bolton Trimarine Group (ES), and Calvopesca (ES).

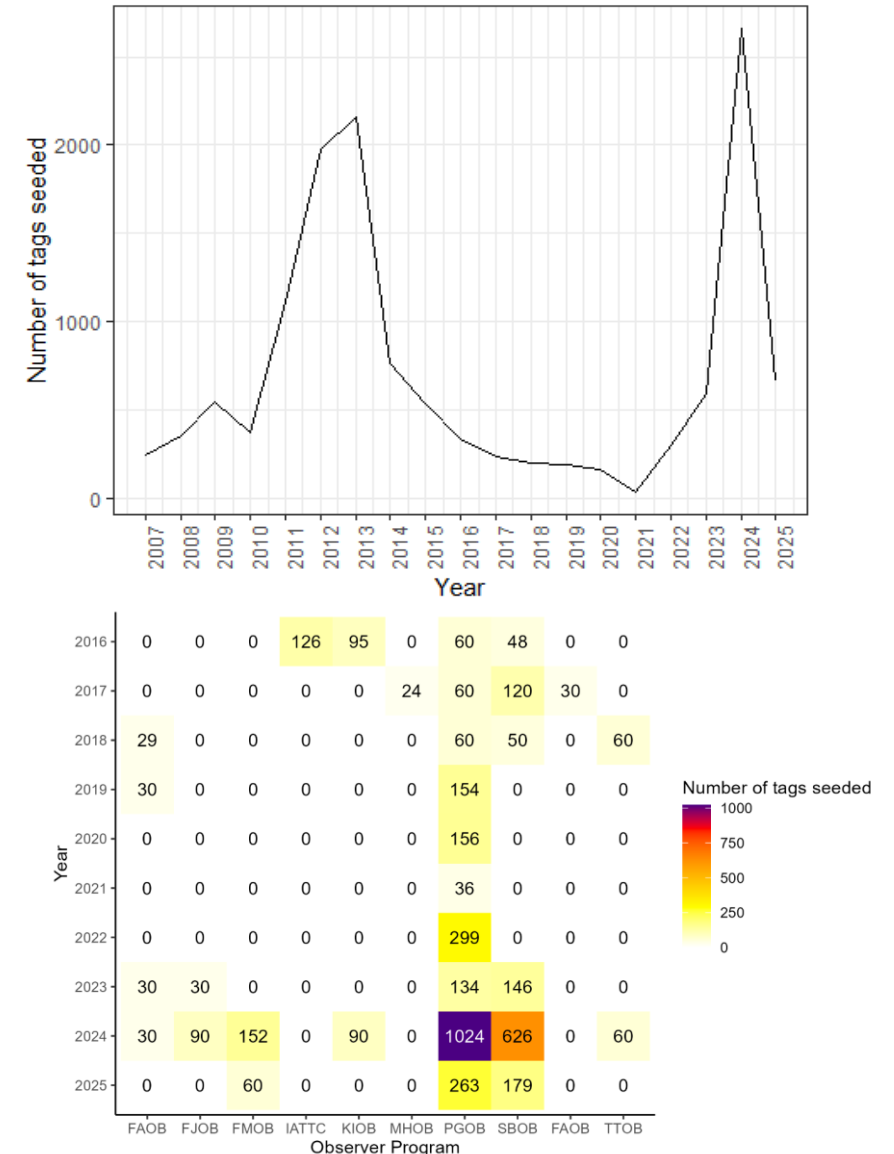
The FAD fishing closure period (6 weeks, 1 July to 15 Aug) is now quite restrictive for the PTTP to operate in this area.

At the current date, the number of tag releases is just over 3,500 (66% bigeye, 32 % yft, 2% skj)



2.2 Tag Seeding

- As no suitable tagging platform was available, decision was made in 2024 to support a large increase in tag seeding to reduce uncertainty in the influence of tagging data in WCPO assessments.
- Spread across fleets and regions, trying to focus in usual areas of release by PTTP campaigns and unloading point importance.
- Development of a new tag seeding protocol to facilitate easier implementation by observer programs.
- A mix of secret and non-secret tag seeding deployments.



2.3 Tag Recovery process improvements



- The PTTP is approaching the 500,000 tagged fish mark with currently over 94,000 observed recoveries

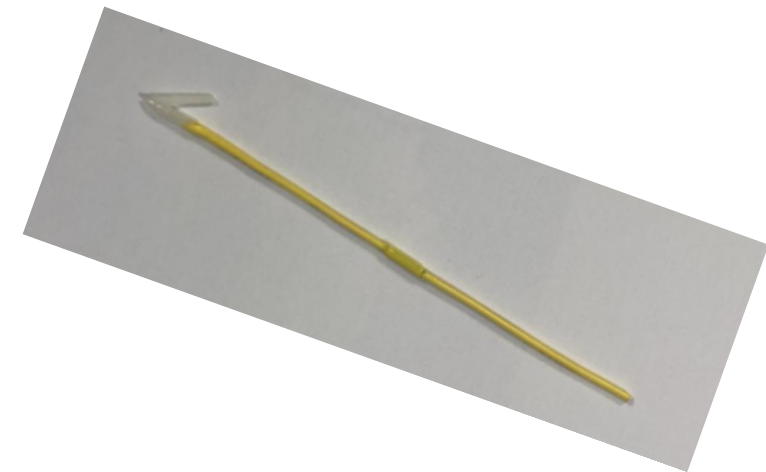
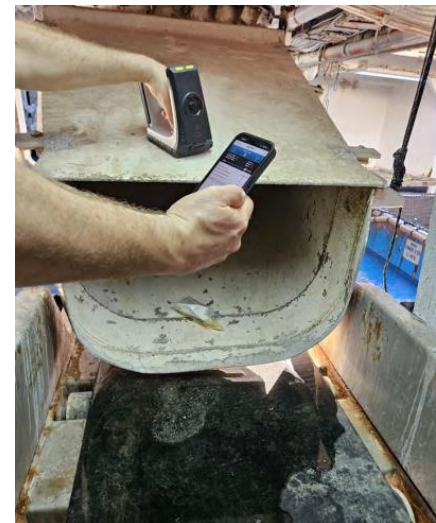
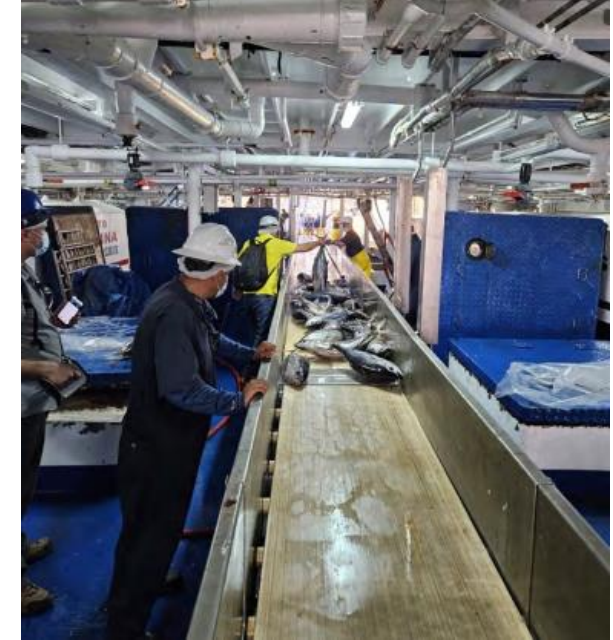
PTTP all cruises		Release numbers				Recapture rate (%)			
		SKJ	YFT	BET	Total	SKJ	YFT	BET	Total
Tag type	ARC	208	787	1,183	2,178	2.9	11.7	17.5	14
	CON	306,097	119,231	66,341	491,766	19.1	16.4	24.2	19.1

- Important effort in 2024 and 2025 to date to visit major ports and improve tag recovery process
- Tag recovery and tag seeding training courses have been updated for observers and debriefers. Training could be done online, allowing at sea observers to participate.

Country	PG	TV	KI	FJ	SB	NR	FM	MH	VU	CK	TO	WS	Total
Observers	79	27	13	10	9	14	3	9	3	1		1	169
Debriefers	17		3	6	5	1	6		4				42
Trainers	1	2	2	2	3	1			2		1		14
Total	97	29	18	18	17	16	9	9	9	1	1	1	225

2.3 Tag Recovery process improvements

- UHF-RFID tag use feasibility evaluation
- Evaluation onboard PS boat
- Proposed pilot study to be considered for late 2025/early 2026



3.1 Tagging Platforms Update

Western Pacific Pole-and-Line Historical Tagging Platform refurbishment project

- Since 2006, the PTTP has chartered NFD pole-and-line in the Solomon Islands.
- The most successful has been FV Soltai 105, but it is currently unable to fish with long-range capacity.
- Agreement between NFD/Bolton has been signed for the boat to be refurbished for the end of 2025.
- This will permit a skipjack-focused cruise to be implemented in 2026.



3.1 Tagging Platforms Update

RV PASIFIKA

- Project updates have been presented at HoF 17 and vessel name has been chosen during the meeting
- Vessel Management Company has been recruited and currently working, in collaborating with the SPC contracted naval architect to finalize vessel design and specification
- It is scheduled to publish the restricted tender to the five shortlisted shipyards on the 1st Sep.
- The 2 stage RFP process should be concluded early March 2026 at contract award with the successful respondent.
- Vessel construction should be achieved mid to end 2028
- Build supervision will be jointly undertaken by SPC, naval architect and the vessel management company.



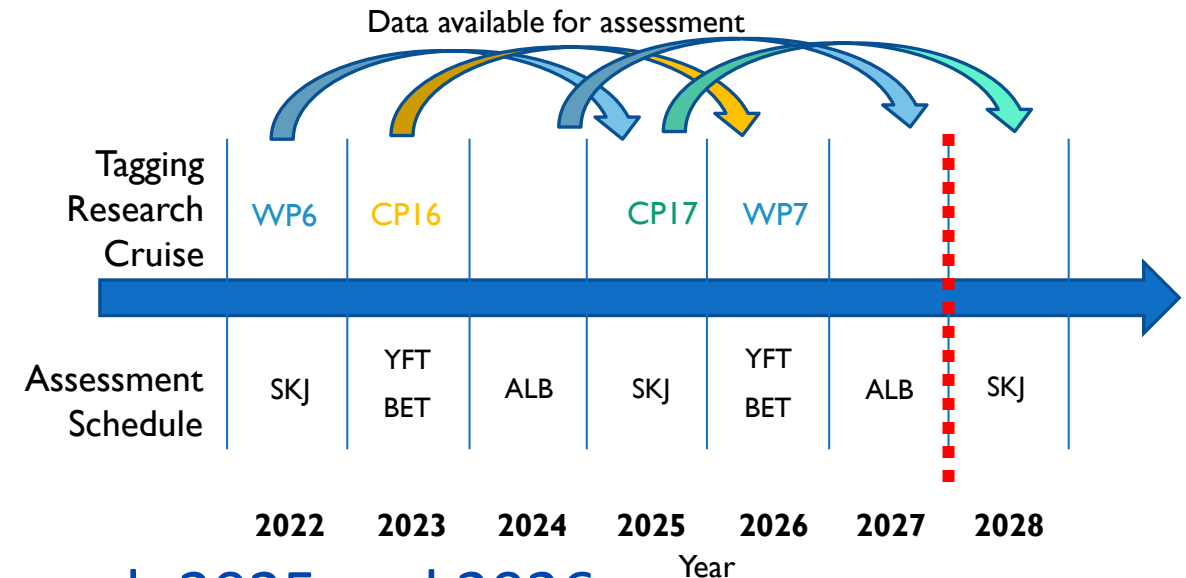
**A research vessel to support
Pacific tuna fisheries management
and ecosystem monitoring**

4.1 Other Regional Tagging

- Any further updates from:
- JPTP
- EPO Tagging

5.1-2 Work-plan: Cruises & Seeding

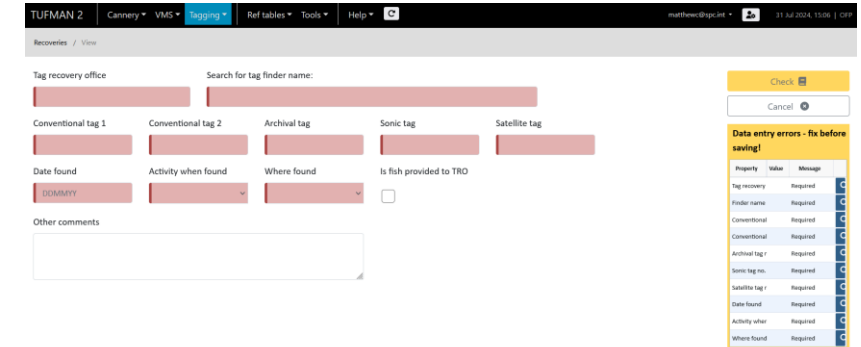
- Scheduled skipjack-focused cruise (pole and line gear) following refurbishment of Soltai 105 in early 2026
- CP 17 bigeye-focused cruise (Trolling lines, dFAD associated) currently underway
- Further collaboration with industry sought to continue access to dFADs



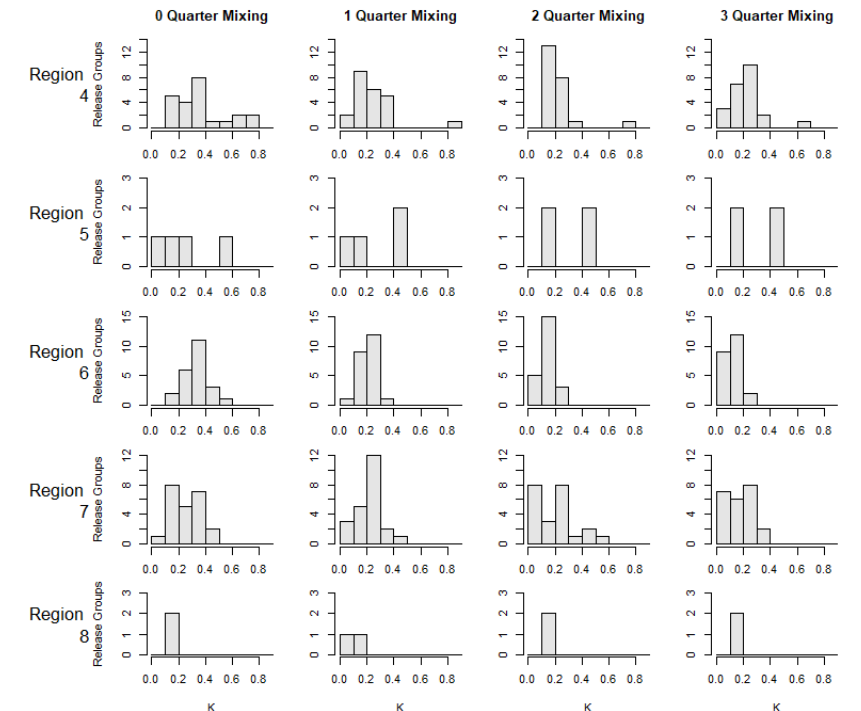
- Tag seeding scale-up will continue through 2025 and 2026
- Will include seeding Japanese tags in regions corresponding to historical JPTP in equatorial zone

5.3 Work-plan: Recovery & Analyses

- Large effort in 2024-2025 to consolidate validation of historical skipjack recoveries
- Trials for direct recovery data entry into TUFMAN2 platform
- Further development of automated validation processes
- Improved tag recovery network across region in parallel to large-scale tag seeding
- Workshop held on potential for IATTC tag movement model application for WCPO
- Supporting analyses for 2025 WCPO skipjack stock assessment: tagging effects, reporting rates and tag mixing (SC21-SA-IP-03/06/07)



The screenshot shows the TUFMAN2 platform interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with tabs: TUFMAN 2, Cannery, VMS, Tagging, Ref tables, Tools, and Help. Below this, there's a 'Tag recovery office' section with a search bar for 'tag finder name'. There are five tabs: Conventional tag 1, Conventional tag 2, Archival tag, Sonic tag, and Satellite tag. Below these are fields for 'Date found', 'Activity when found', 'Where found', and 'Is fish provided to TRO'. There's also a 'Other comments' text area. On the right side, there's a 'Data entry errors - fix before saving!' table with columns for Property, Value, and Message. The table lists various required fields like 'Tag recovery', 'Recovery name', 'Conventional', 'Archival tag 1', 'Sonic tag no.', 'Satellite tag 1', 'Date found', 'Activity when found', and 'Where found'.



6.1 Administrative Matters

- SSP co-financing of the PTTP is sustainable where the contribution is <25% of the total PTTP budget
- Recent years have seen the SSP co-financing the PTTP up to 38%
- WCPFC21 approved 2025 incremental budget increase to reduce SSP co-finance proportion towards <25%
- Recommend final increase for 2026 be approved at WCPFC22

Budget	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Total	USD 1,433,875	USD 1,402,880	USD 1,450,000	USD 1,450,000	USD 1,475,000	USD 1,475,000	USD 1,475,000	USD 1,475,000
WCPFC	USD 730,000	USD 730,000	USD 730,000	USD 800,000	USD 875,000	USD 950,000	USD 950,000	USD 950,000
Rep. of Korea	USD 166,000	USD 166,000	USD 166,000	USD 166,000	USD 166,000	USD 166,000	USD 166,000	USD 166,000
SSP	USD 537,875	USD 506,880	USD 554,000	USD 484,000	USD 434,000	USD 359,000	USD 359,000	USD 359,000
SSP%	38%	36%	38%	33%	29%	24%	24%	24%

6.2 Recommendations to SC21

- **Note the critical importance of effective tag seeding** for informing stock assessment and support the increased deployment and fleet coverage of tag seeding experiments through regional and national observer programmes.
- **Note the need for member participation and support in tag reporting** as both wild and seeded tags continue to be found throughout the fishery.
- **Note the effort for refurbishment of the Soltai 105** for the purposes of continued skipjack-tagging, critical for stock assessment input
- **Note and support the ongoing regional fisheries research vessel project.**
- **Consider and support the PTTP work-plan** for 2025-2028, and indicative budget presented here