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TWENTY-FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

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

**WCPFC-SC21-AR/CCM-08 (Rev.01)
5 July 2025**

FRENCH POLYNESIA



WESTERN AND CENTRAL PACIFIC COMMISSION

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

FRENCH POLYNESIA

Scientific data was provided to the Commission in accordance with the decision relating to the provision of scientific data to the Commission by the 29 April 2024.	YES
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Abstract

In 2024, the French Polynesian professional tuna fleet included 82 longliners, measuring between 13 and 24 meters. These vessels operated exclusively within the French Polynesia Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). In addition, 344 small boats, between 5 and 11 meters, used artisanal fishing methods such as pole-and-line, handlines, and trolling. These small-scale fishers operated only within territorial waters.

The total nominal catch for the professional tuna fisheries in 2024 is estimated at approximately 11 088 metric tons, with albacore accounting for 47%, yellowfin tuna for 22 %, bigeye tuna 11 % and skipjack 4 %.

The longline fleet experienced a sharp decline in effort and total catch in 2020, followed by a steady recovery and significant growth in subsequent years. In contrast, the artisanal nearshore fishery has shown a slow but continuous decline since 2015, partly attributed to the reinforcement of fishermen training programs.

Since 2006, all sharks (except mako) have been fully protected within the entire French Polynesia EEZ. In December 2012, mako sharks were also granted full protection, making French Polynesia EEZ the largest shark sanctuary in the world.

1. Annual Fisheries Information

Tuna fishery is a major component in the economic and social development of French Polynesia. The professional tuna fishery is divided into two segments: a small-scale coastal fishery and an offshore longline fishery. Since December 2000, no foreign fishing agreements have been in place within the French Polynesian EEZ.

The **professional small scale near shore fishery** includes two types of vessels. The *poti marara* (literally "flying-fish boats") are small wooden or fiberglass boats, 6 to 8 meters long, adapted for various fishing techniques such as trolling, vertical longlining, and harpooning. The *bonitiers* ("skipjack boats") are slightly larger, 10 to 12 meters long, also made of wood or fiberglass, and mainly target skipjack tuna using pole-and-line methods. This fleet operates mostly within territorial waters.

The **longline fleet** consists exclusively of tuna longliners using drifting longlines. Only three vessels have onboard freezer capacity. All longliners operate exclusively within the French Polynesia EEZ.

1.1. Annual catch and effort estimates

Table 1 – Annual catch estimates for the longline fleet in the convention area

Species	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024	
	Retained	Discard	Retained	Discard	Retained	Discard	Retained	Discard	Retained	Discard
Albacore Catch	2780	32	2662	27	4133	52	5159	62	5001	64
Bigeye Catch	855	19	1020	25	1356	32	1192	40	1250	69
Pacific Bluefin Catch	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0,2	1	0
Skipjack Catch	14	39	13	66	17	51	16	104	13	403
Yellowfin Catch	1080	55	2219	131	1310	63	1424	56	1577	64
Black Marlin Catch	18	0	18	2	8	1	8	1	7	1
Blue Marlin Catch	240	9	173	3	177	2	200	2	214	3
Striped Marlin Catch	97	2	128	1	68	1	133	0	163	2
Swordfish Catch	162	17	172	2	146	8	126	5	116	5
Total	5246	173	6405	257	7218	210	8260	270	8342	611

Figure 1 – Historical annual catch estimates for the longline fleet

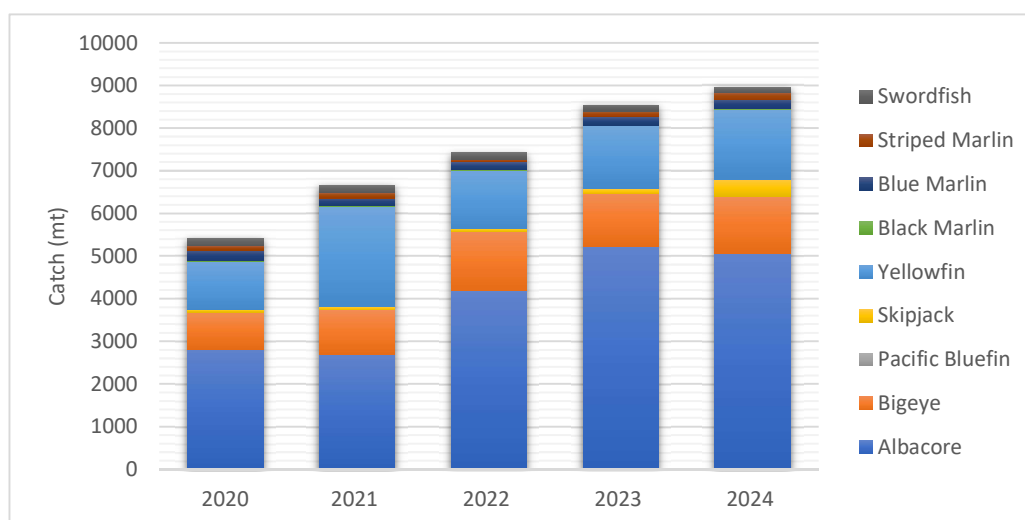


Table 2 - Annual catch estimates for the small-scale nearshore fleet (*Bonitier* and *Poti marara*) in the convention area

Species	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Albacore tuna	175	275	221	283	354
Bigeye tuna	15	29	14	12	23
Skipjack	350	391	466	392	459
Yellowfin tuna	900	887	826	991	881
Dolphin fish	217	160	327	328	258
Billfish	291	232	249	190	207
Wahoo	77	55	74	68	85
Other	142	140	132	144	136
Total	2 167	2 169	2 309	2 408	2 404

Figure 2 – Historical annual catch estimates for the small-scale nearshore fleet (*Bonitier* and *Poti marara*)

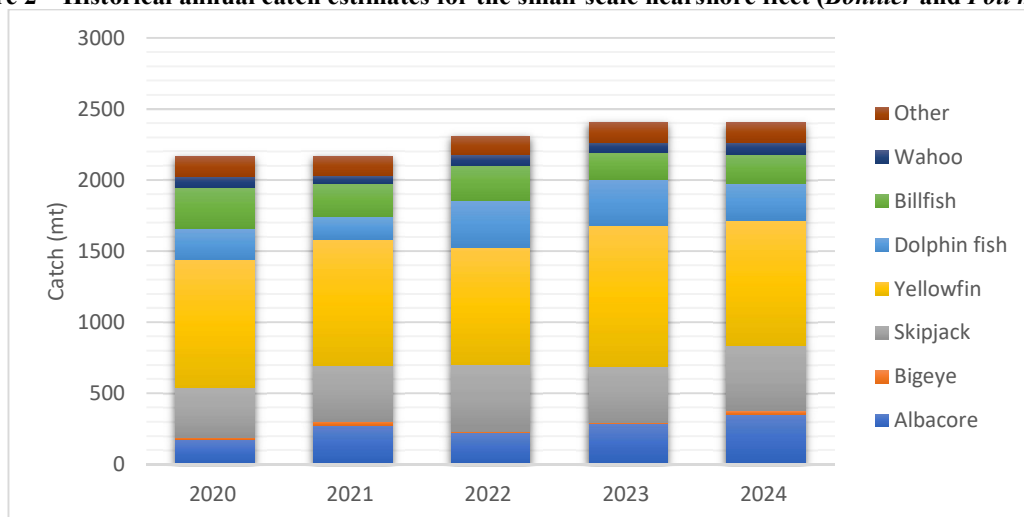


Table 3 – Annual fishing effort by fleet

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Small scale near shore fleet (fishing days)	36 651	35 100	35 709	38 577	34 571
Longline fleet (million of hooks)	17.9	19.5	21.3	21	19.5

1.2. Fleet structure

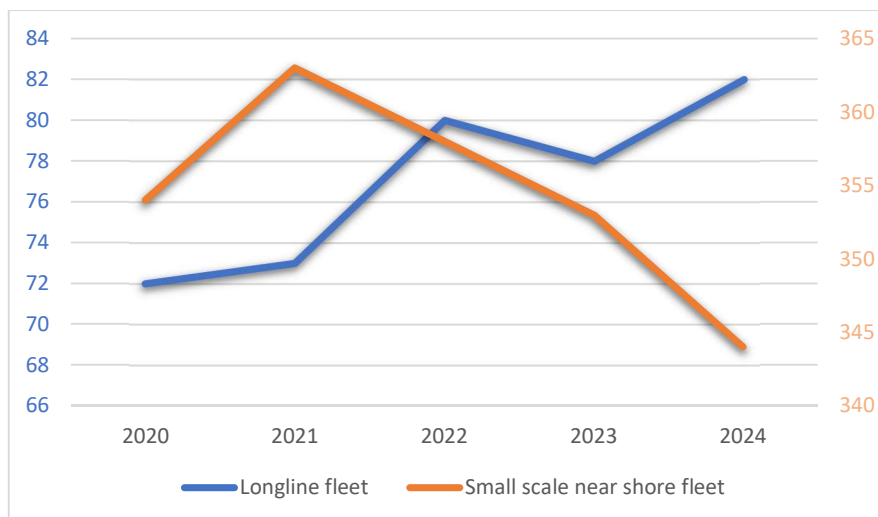
Table 4 – Number of vessels by size for the longline fleet

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
00-50 GRT	36	37	38	38	38
51-200 GRT	36	36	42	40	44
201-500 GRT	0	0	0	0	0
500+ GRT	0	0	0	0	0
Total Vessels	72	73	80	78	82

Table 5 – Number of vessels by size for the small scale near shore fleet

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
00-50 GRT	354	363	358	356	344
51-200 GRT	0	0	0	0	0
201-500 GRT	0	0	0	0	0
500+ GRT	0	0	0	0	0
Total Vessels	354	363	358	353	344

Figure 3 – Historical annual vessel numbers for the national fleet

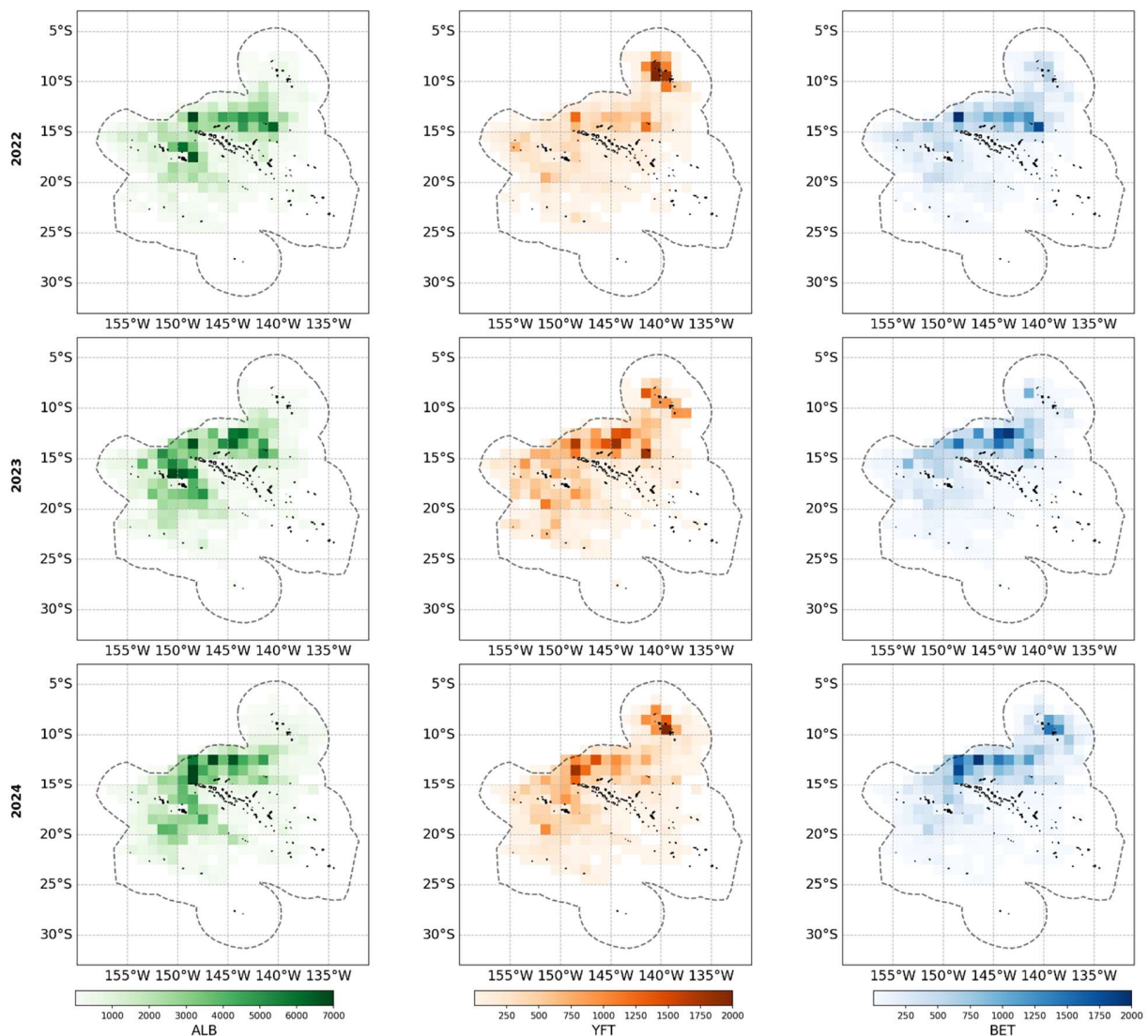


1.3. Fishing pattern

More than three-quarters of the nearshore fishery is based in the Society Archipelago. Although individual fishing effort shows some fluctuations, overall effort remains relatively stable throughout the year, with no clear seasonal patterns observed.

The longline fleet, almost entirely based in Tahiti, typically operates in about 40% of the EEZ. However main fishing grounds have historically concentrated in the northern part of the EEZ (10°-20° S and 140°-150°W).

Figure 4 – Spatial patterns in catch of Albacore, Yellowfin and Bigeye tuna for the longline fishery



1.4. Accidental catches and discards

Recorded interactions with species of special interest are summarized in table 6. Interactions with marine mammals are mostly related to depredation.

Table 6 – Observed catches of species of special interest by the longline fleet

Year	Category	Species	Number	No. Alive	No. Dead
2024	BIRDS	BIRD (UNIDENTIFIED)	39	0	39
		PETRELS AND SHEARWATERS NEI	11	0	11
	MARINE MAMMALS	SHORT-FINNED PILOT WHALE	1	1	0
	MARINE REPTILES	LOGGERHEAD TURTLE	1	1	0
	RAYS	GIANT MANTA	1	1	0
2023	BIRDS	BIRD (UNIDENTIFIED)	38	1	37
		PETRELS AND SHEARWATERS NEI	19	0	19
	MARINE REPTILES	MARINE TURTLES NEI	1	0	1
		LEATHERBACK TURTLE	1	1	0
2022	BIRDS	GULLS - TERNS AND SKUAS	1	0	1
		BIRD (UNIDENTIFIED)	7	0	7
		PETRELS AND SHEARWATERS NEI	4	0	4
2021	BIRDS	BIRD (UNIDENTIFIED)	16	0	16
2021	BIRDS	BOOBIES AND GANNETS NEI	2	0	2
		PETRELS AND SHEARWATERS NEI	11	1	10
2020	BIRDS	BIRD (UNIDENTIFIED)	1	0	1
		BLACK-FOOTED ALBATROSS	2	0	2
	BIRDS	LAYSAN ALBATROSS	3	0	3
		PETRELS AND SHEARWATERS NEI	21	1	20
	MARINE REPTILES	LOGGERHEAD TURTLE	2	2	0

Discards by the longline fleet are estimated at around 7% of the nominal catch. A detailed breakdown for the main target species is provided in Table 7 (sharks not included). No discards are reported for the coastal fleet.

Table 7 – Catch estimates of discards of target species by the longline fleet in 2024

Species Group	Species Name	Discard (MT)
Tuna	ALBACORE	64
	BIGEYE	69
	PACIFIC BLUEFIN	0
	SKIPJACK	403
	YELLOWFIN	64
Billfish	BLACK MARLIN	1
	BLUE MARLIN	1
	STRIPED MARLIN	2
	SWORDFISH	5
Total		609

All shark species are protected, and finning is strictly prohibited. Shark catches account for approximately 8% of the nominal catch. Overall, 81% of the sharks caught were released alive.

Table 8 – Catch estimates of sharks and proportion of sharks caught alive when released by the longline fleet in 2024

Species Name	Number	Weight (MT)	Proportion alive
BLUE SHARK	4185	80	96%
SILKY SHARK	1758	61	76%
GREAT HAMMERHEAD	9	1	100%
MAKO SHARK	396	17	72%
OCEANIC WHITE-TIP SHARK	5870	300	74%
PORBEAGLE SHARK	0	0	-
WHALE SHARK	0	0	-
THRESHER SHARK	73	4	85%
Total	12 291	463	81%

Note: Number and weight estimates are based on logsheet and observer data, while the proportion of individuals released alive is derived from observer data. All sharks are released.

2. Research and statistics

2.1. Statistical data collection system

The data collection system for the longline fishery consists of six main components.

- *Fishing license*

Fishing licenses for domestic vessels are issued for the lifetime of the vessel, provided that ownership does not change and the vessel passes its annual safety inspection. Any change of ownership or major modification to the vessel requires a new licensing procedure. Currently, French Polynesia does not impose a limit on the number of domestic vessels authorized to operate within its EEZ.

Fishing permits for foreign vessels are issued on an annual basis; however, no permits have been granted since the termination of the fishing agreement in December 2000.

- *Boat activity*

Every weekday, the Fisheries Office conducts a census of fleet activity at the fishing port. The primary objective is to monitor the overall activity of the fleet in near real-time. These data are also used as a key input for estimating the catches of vessels that do not report their landings accurately. Since 2013, this port-based census has been complemented by the analysis of VMS (Vessel Monitoring System) data.

- *Logbook*

Licensed operators are required to keep and submit daily records of their fishing activities at the operational level to the Fisheries Office. The reporting coverage rate is 100%.

- *Unloadings*

All licensed longline vessels are required to unload their catches at the fishing port of Papeete. The port manager monitor the quantities landed in order to collect unloading fees. The coverage rate for commercial landings is 100%.

- *Observer programme*

French Polynesia's Observer Program was launched in September 2002 with funding from the EU-funded PROCFISH project (2002-2007), followed by support from the SCIFISH project. In 2024, the program's team consisted of five observers, two port samplers and one coordinator. Observers trips were conducted exclusively aboard domestic longliners. In 2024, the coverage rate reached 6.1 % of the total days at sea. Standard protocols and data collection forms from the Pacific Community (SPC) are used, and all data are processed by SPC.

Table 9 – Observers trips in French Polynesia since 2005.

Year	No. observers	No. trips	No. days at sea	No. sets	No. hooks	% coverage
2005	3	18	422	255	635 114	2.9 %
2006	6	20	487	312	723 149	5.9 %
2007	2	17	217	138	305 977	1.8%
2008	4	17	300	206	510 115	2.5 %
2009	6	51	800	488	1 130 574	6.5%
2010	5	44	768	453	894 426	6.5%
2011	6	33	531	355	1 130 880	6.2 %
2012	6	34	521	282	825 810	4.1 %
2013	6	38	697	346	886 303	4.4%
2014	6	42	717	432	850 452	4.5 %
2015	6	40	556	321	607 455	3.6%
2016	4	25	477	323	555 952	3.4%
2017	10	43	751	467	773 427	5.3%
2018	7	25	430	270	448 780	2.8%
2019	8	45	757	479	726 934	4.9%
2020	7	48	933	591	795 583	6.3%
2021	7	57	1 056	658	874 318	6.6%
2022	8	62	1182	771	1 056 319	6.8%
2023	6	56	1072	676	876 083	6.3%
2024	5	58	1013	631	935 198	6.1%

▪ *Port sampling*

Port sampling in Papeete has been conducted regularly for several years, although coverage has remained low and became very limited in recent years due to logistical challenges. However, these difficulties were partly addressed with the completion of a centralized unloading facility in Papeete. Since 2005, a dedicated team of two port samplers has been carrying out sampling operations at the port.

Table 10 – Port sampling operations since 2005

Year	No unloadings	No unloadings sampled	Sampling coverage
2005	892	232	26%
2006	876	210	24%
2007	926	335	36%
2008	858	439	51%
2009	883	477	54%
2010	841	407	48%
2011	883	446	51%
2012	938	386	41%
2013	972	346	36%
2014	941	433	46%
2015	1014	410	40%
2016	965	416	43%
2017	969	174	18%
2018	1 005	92	9%
2019	1 080	266	25%
2020	999	200	20%
2021	1 068	232	22%
2022	1 122	245	22%
2023	1 161	118	10%
2024	1 150	141	12%

▪ *Coastal fishery*

Data collection for coastal fisheries is more challenging, as vessels are scattered across the many islands of French Polynesia. Monitoring relies on two main components: a licensing system and the use of logbooks. The logbook reporting coverage rate is 100%.

2.2. Research

Observers regularly collect biological samples from the four main tuna species (muscle, liver, stomach, gonads and otoliths) and swordfish (otoliths only) which are sent to the Oceanic Fisheries Program of the SPC.

ADDENDUM TO ANNUAL REPORT PART 1

8 April 2024¹

SECTION A: SPECIFIC INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED IN ANNUAL REPORT PART 1 AS REQUIRED BY CMMS AND OTHER DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSION.

<p>CMM 2009-03 [Swordfish], Para 8</p>	<p>In 2024, 43 vessels caught 10 MT as bycatch in south of 20°S and no vessel targeted swordfish.</p> <p>There’s no vessel operating under charter in FP.</p> <p>No other vessels fishing within south of 20° S.</p> <table><tr><th rowspan="2">Year</th><th colspan="2">CCM-flagged # vessels south of 20S</th><th colspan="2">Chartered vessels*</th><th colspan="3">Other vessels fishing within the CCM's waters south of 20S</th></tr><tr><th>Catch (tonnes)</th><th>Vessel numbers</th><th>Catch (tonnes)</th><th>Vessel numbers</th><th>Flag</th><th>Catch (tonnes)</th><th>Vessel numbers</th></tr><tr><td>2021</td><td>43</td><td>43</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>2022</td><td>13</td><td>42</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>2023</td><td>14</td><td>54</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr><tr><td>2024</td><td>10</td><td>43</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td><td>-</td></tr></table>	Year	CCM-flagged # vessels south of 20S		Chartered vessels*		Other vessels fishing within the CCM's waters south of 20S			Catch (tonnes)	Vessel numbers	Catch (tonnes)	Vessel numbers	Flag	Catch (tonnes)	Vessel numbers	2021	43	43						2022	13	42	-	-	-	-	-	2023	14	54	-	-	-	-	-	2024	10	43	-	-	-	-	-
Year	CCM-flagged # vessels south of 20S		Chartered vessels*		Other vessels fishing within the CCM's waters south of 20S																																											
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2024	10	43	-	-	-	-	-																																									
<p>Observer coverage (WCPFC 11 decision – para 484(b))</p>	<p>In 2024, observer coverage for the longline fleet reached 6.1%, based on the number of observer sea days. The French Polynesia Observer Programme operates exclusively within the French Polynesia Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ-FP).</p> <table><tr><th colspan="3">Days at sea</th></tr><tr><th>Total estimated</th><th>Observer</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>16528</td><td>1013</td><td>6.1%</td></tr></table>	Days at sea			Total estimated	Observer	%	16528	1013	6.1%																																						
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¹ Reporting requirements requested by CMMs and decisions of the Commission, as of WCPFC20 (Dec 2023). First issued on 8 April 2024. Changes made from Addendum for 2022 include the revised CMM 2023-03 for North Pacific Swordfish and **WCPFC20 Agreed Audit Points**.

CMM 2009-06 [Transshipment] , Para 11 (ANNEX II)	No transshipment is allowed, and no transshipment occurred in 2024 for the French Polynesia national fleet.
CMM 2011-03 [Impact of PS fishing on cetaceans], Para 5	French Polynesia does not operate any purse seine vessels within its national fleet.
CMM 2018-03 [Seabirds] Para 13	All the information is detailed in the tables below.

[CMM 2018-03](#): [Seabirds] Annex 2. Guidelines for reporting templates for Part 1 report

The following tables should be included in the annual Part 1 country reports, summarising the most recent five years.

Table x: Effort, observed and estimated seabird captures by fishing year for [CCM] [South of 30°S; 25°S-30°S; North of 23°N; or 23°N – 25°S¹]. For each year, the table gives the total number of hooks; the number of observed hooks; observer coverage (the percentage of hooks that were observed); the number of observed captures (both dead and alive); and the capture rate (captures per thousand hooks).

Year	Fishing effort				Observed seabird captures <i>Between 25°S – 23°N</i>	
	Number of vessels	Number of hooks	Observed hooks	% hooks observed	Number	Rate ²
2020	72	17 945 992	795 583	4.40	27	0.0339
2021	73	19 452 602	889 174	4.60	29	0.0326
2022	80	21 287 325	1 060 693	4.98	12	0.0113
2023	78	21 047 688	873 083	4.15	57	0.0653
2024	82	19 490 290	932 272	4.78	50	0.0536

¹ Insert 'North of 23°N', 'South of 30°S', '25°S-30°S' or '23°N – 25°S'. For CCMs fishing in all areas, provide separate tables for each area.

² Provide data as captures per one thousand hooks.

Table y: Proportion of mitigation types¹ used by the fleet in 2024.

	Combination of Mitigation Measures	Proportion of observed effort using mitigation measures					
		South of 30°S	25°S-30°S	25°S to 23°N	North of 23°N		
	No mitigation measures			55.56			
Options required south of 25°S	TL + NS						
	TL + WB						
	NS + WB						
	TL + WB + NS						
	HS						
Other options 25°S-30°S	WB						
	TL						
Other options north of 23°N	SS/BC/WB/DSLS						
	SS/BC/WB/(MOD or BDB)						
Provide any other combination of mitigation measures here	MOD			32.70			
	NS			7.94			
	NS MOD			3.02			
	BDB MOD			0.16			
	NS BDB			0.16			
	WB BC DSLS MOD			0.32			
	WB MOD			0.16			
	Totals (must equal 100%)			100			

¹ TL = tori line, NS = night setting, WB = weighted branch lines, SS = side setting, BC = bird curtain, BDB = blue dyed bait, DSLS = deep setting line shooter, MOD = management of offal discharge, HS = hook-shielding device.

Table z: Number of observed seabird captures in [CCM] longline fisheries, 2024, by species and area.

Species	South of 30°S	25°S-30°S	North of 23°N	23°N –25°S	Total
BIRD (UNIDENTIFIED)	0	0	0	39	39
PETRELS AND SHEARWATERS NEI	0	0	0	11	11
Total				50	50

SECTION B: ADDITIONAL ANNUAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS THAT COULD BE INCLUDED IN ANNUAL REPORT PART 1, IF NOT OTHERWISE REPORTED ANNUALLY TO WCPFC.

<p><u>CMM 2006-04</u> [South West striped Marlin], Para 4</p>	<p>In 2024, 81 vessels recorded a bycatch of 100 MT of striped marlin south of 15°S. No vessels flagged to French Polynesia targeted striped marlin in 2024.</p>
<p><u>CMM 2015-02</u> [South Pacific Albacore] Para 4</p>	<p>This is addressed through the regular provision of operational catch and effort logsheet data to the SPC, which automatically incorporates the data into the WCPFC databases, in accordance with our authorization.</p>
<p><u>CMM 2019-03</u> [North Pacific Albacore], Para 3</p>	<p>Our national fleet did not fish north of the equator.</p>
<p><u>CMM 2023-03</u> [North Pacific Swordfish], para 4</p>	<p>Our national fleet did not fish north of the equator.</p>