



TECHNICAL AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

TWENTY-SECOND REGULAR SESSION

23-29 September 2026

Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia (Hybrid)

Annual Report on High Seas Boarding and Inspections (HSBI) Scheme

WCPFC-TCC22-2026-RP04

1 July 2026

Submitted by the Secretariat

Purpose

1. This paper summarises High Seas Boarding and Inspection (HSBI) activities for 2025.

Key Messages

- a. HSBI is increasingly operating as part of a broader integrated MCS framework that is evolving the regional inspection capability and supporting more risk-based operational targeting. TCC may wish to further consider how evolving inspection methodologies affect interpretation of HSBI trends over time.
- b. HSBI remains an important operational verification tool as surveillance and analytical capabilities continue to expand.
- c. Operational inspections continue to identify issues relating to bycatch mitigation, shark handling, vessel identification, reporting accuracy, and crew labour conditions.
- d. Regional operational systems and guidance continue to develop, strengthening consistency, reporting efficiency, information management, and case management.
- e. HSBI activities increasingly operate alongside broader cooperative surveillance, intelligence sharing, and port CCM monitoring arrangements across the Convention Area.
- f. Some outstanding investigations that are more than two years old, remain an issue.

Introduction

2. The Commission's high seas boarding and inspection procedures are contained in CMM 2006-08, which was amended in 2025 (CMM 2025-07) to recognise a future WCPFC Electronic Monitoring Programme. The new [CMM 2025-07](#) took effect on 3 February 2026.
3. Since initial implementation, the Commission has endorsed procedural specifications to enable boarding and inspections of fishing vessels on the high seas in the Convention Area by authorised inspectors from authorised inspection vessels, and set requirements such as for inspection flags and pennants, and the [Register of Authorised Inspection Vessels](#).
4. While HSBI remains an important MCS tool, the operational context in which HSBI activities are undertaken has continued to evolve significantly in recent years.
5. The COVID-19 period accelerated the use of alternative monitoring and surveillance approaches, including the increased operational use of Automatic Identification System (AIS), VMS and aerial surveillance, and integrated data analysis to support compliance monitoring and risk assessment activities. Since that time, CCMs and regional partners have continued to expand and refine the application of these tools.
6. In particular, testing and operational deployment of emerging technologies—including satellite-based monitoring and maritime intelligence platforms such as Starboard Maritime Intelligence and Global Fishing Watch which complement operational maritime surveillance pictures, together with regional cooperative arrangements—have increasingly become part of routine MCS operations in the Convention Area. These developments have improved the ability of CCMs to identify, assess and prioritise potential risk activity, including activity that may not be readily detectable through traditional monitoring methods alone.
7. At the same time, the increasing integration of multiple data sources and analytical tools is supporting more comprehensive risk assessments and more targeted operational responses. HSBI therefore continues to play an important role within a broader and increasingly integrated MCS framework, often providing an

operational mechanism to verify, corroborate, or further investigate risks identified through other surveillance and intelligence tools.

8. In parallel, a growing number of CCMs are implementing or working on ways to strengthen port CCM measures and associated information-sharing arrangements, further expanding opportunities for coordinated monitoring and compliance action in relation to higher-risk vessels and activities across the Convention Area.
9. Summary information on WCPFC's HSBI activities is available on the [WCPFC website](#).

Members authorised for HSBI

10. As of May 2026, seventeen (17) members have notified the Commission of their intention to participate in the WCPFC HSBI scheme. The latest CCM to notify of their intention to participate in HSBI activities was Solomon Islands (Table 1).

Table 1: Members that have notified their intent to conduct high seas boardings and inspections, and number of inspection vessels. Separate notifications were provided by France for French authorities that are based in French Polynesia and New Caledonia.

CCM	Year notification received	WCPFC notifications received (CMM 2006-08 06)	No. of active vessels on the Register of Authorised Inspection Vessels
Australia	2010	YES	54
Canada	2008	YES	5
China	2024		26
Chinese Taipei	2010		20
Cook Islands	2023	YES	1
Federated States of Micronesia	2008		3
Fiji	2019		4
France	2011	YES	12
Japan	2009	YES	6
Kiribati	2026		2
New Zealand	2008	YES	9
Papua New Guinea	2008		1
Korea (Republic of)	2013		2
Solomon Islands	2026		2
Tuvalu	2010		1
United States of America	2008	YES	90
Vanuatu	2025		1

11. In 2025, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Chinese Taipei, the United States, and Vanuatu made updates to add or delete their vessels on the [Register of Authorised Inspection Vessels](#). In the first quarter of 2026, CCMs were notified of additional updates by Chinese Taipei and the United States. All changes were notified to CCMs in WCPFC Circulars.
12. Collectively, as of May 2026, the HSBI participating members had 239 vessels with “Active” status on the WCPFC [Register of Authorised Inspection Vessels](#) (Figure 1).

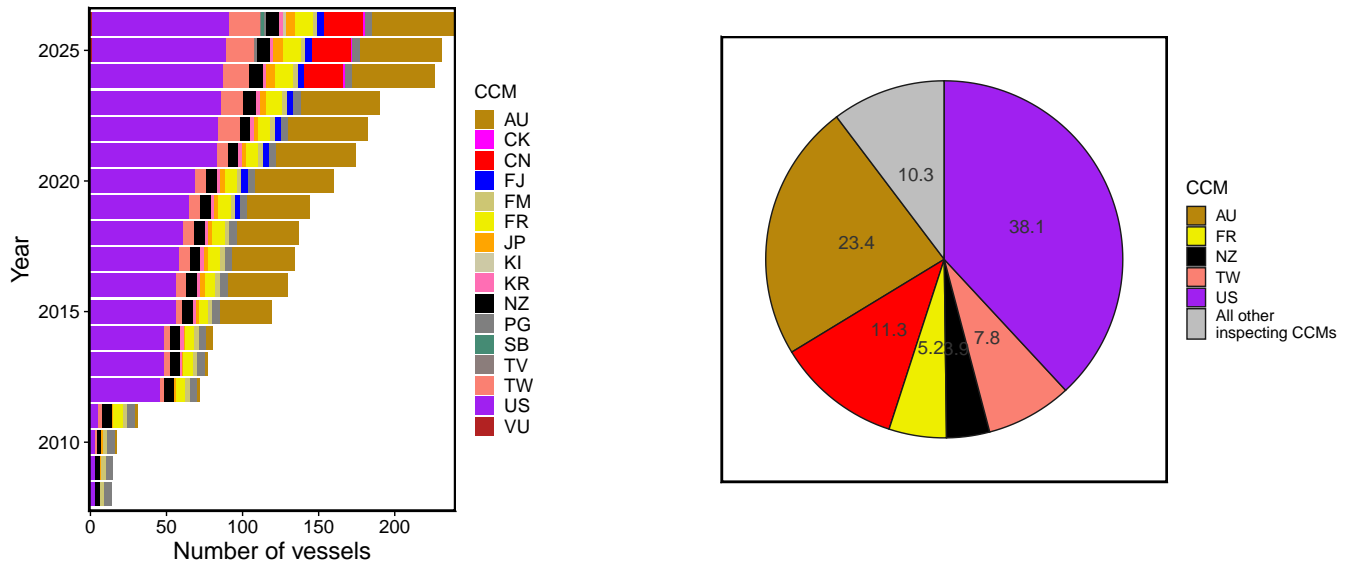


Figure 1: Number of active registered inspection vessels by year (left), and percentage of inspection vessels by CCM on the WCPFC Register of Authorised Inspection Vessels in 2025 (right).

Inspection system for HSBI reporting

13. On 26 March 2025, [Circular 2025/16](#) notified CCMs of the launch of a new system for directly notifying and uploading supporting information related to HSBI events. Further details were shared in June 2025 in [Circular 2025/36](#) and [Circular 2025/39](#).
14. The Secretariat enters HSBI reports received by e-mail, unless a CCM chooses to provide the reports through direct entry into the system. The system also automated the creation of Article 25(2) cases where potential infringements are identified. Supporting [Helpdesk](#) documents are available online and interested CCMs are encouraged to contact the Secretariat to discuss the option of direct entry and training in the use of the Inspections system.
15. Authorised flag CCMs users can view HSBI reports for their flagged vessels in the new system and where relevant, can use the link in the relevant compliance case file to view the supporting documentation.
16. CCMs are reminded to update their contacts for Authorities of Fishing Vessels in the WCPFC CCM Contact List to enable automated notifications from CCMs that are directly entering HSBI events. CCMs also depend on the correct contact details for the Authorities of Inspection Vessels and Authorised MCS Entities and Personnel if providing emails notifications for HSBI and compliance cases.

Review of HSBI activities

Number and locations of HSBI events in the Convention Area

17. Between 2008 and 2019, there was an overall increase in boarding and inspections with 169 HSBI conducted in 2018, and 157 in 2019, as reflected in the number of HSBI reports received (Figure 2, with more detail in Annex A). There was a distinct drop in activity to 36 inspections in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with the number of HSBI events averaging 0.21% of the 2018 and 2019 pre-COVID-19 levels of inspections. Since 2021, there has generally been an increase in the level of inspections with 134 HSBI conducted in 2025.

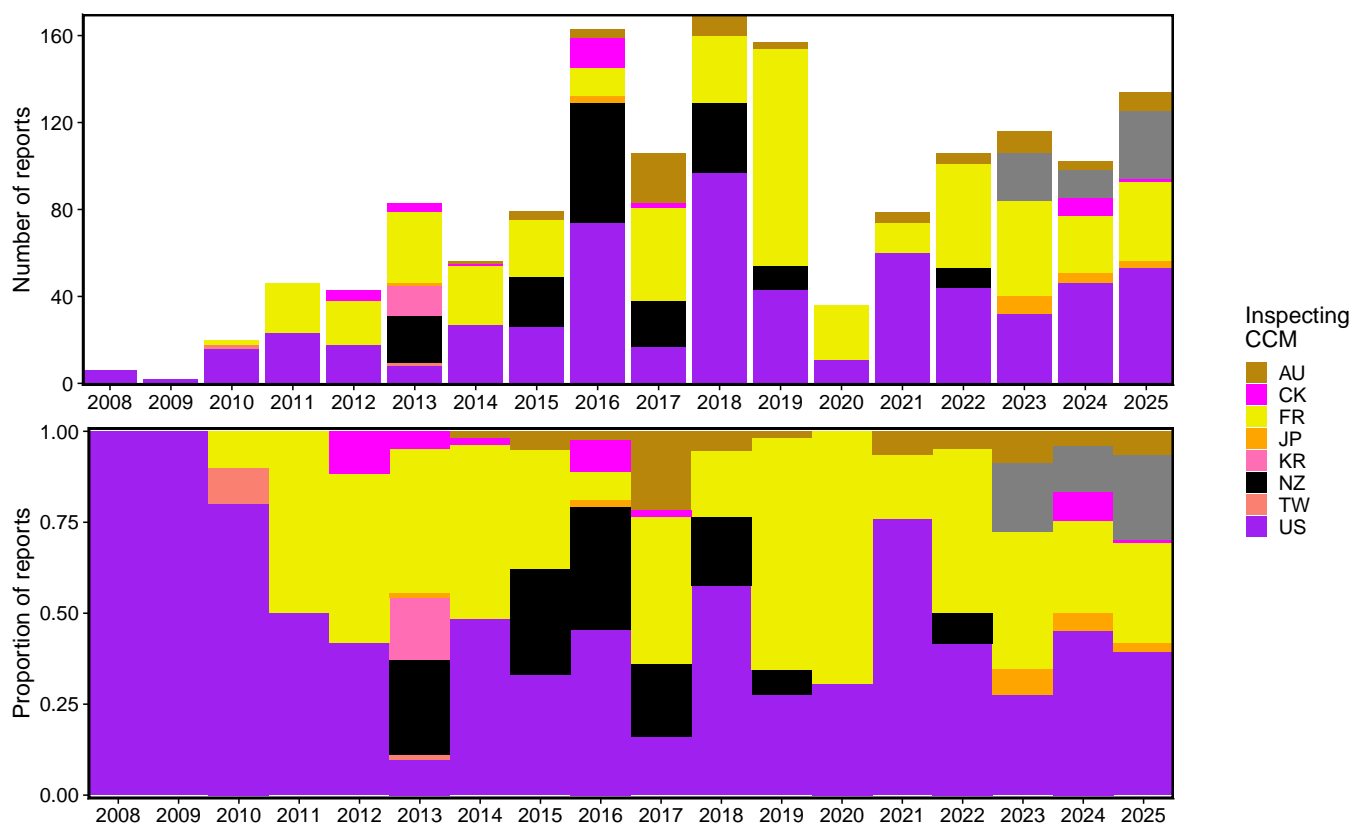


Figure 2: Number of HSBI reports (top) and proportion of reports (bottom) by Inspecting CCMs between 2008 and 2025 (numbers for 2025 are incomplete).

18. Inspecting CCMs provide the notification of intent to board, completion of boarding, and/or final boarding reports. Some HSBI events are reported as interrogations where an inspecting party did not board, or only boarded after an indication that an inspection was warranted (see Annex B, Figure B-1 for the number of inspection reports from each inspecting CCM, and the flag CMM of the vessels inspected as documented in the reports). Although there were fewer active inspecting CCMs in 2020 and 2021, inspection numbers subsequently increased, and are currently close to pre-COVID-19 levels (see Annex C, Figure C-1). Approximately 92% of the vessels inspected over the past five years were longliners (see Table 2).

Table 2: Number of vessels inspected by vessel type for each year from 2021 to 2025.

Year	Fish carrier	Longliner	Pole and line	Purse seiner	Support vessel	Total inspected
2021	2	55			1	58
2022	3	86	2	3		94
2023	1	84		3	3	91
2024	4	75	1	2	2	84
2025	4	92	2	1		99

19. Between 2018 to 2025, the highest proportion of vessels inspected occurred in 2018 (see Annex A, Table A-1). As expected, the CCMs with the highest numbers of vessels on the Record of Fishing Vessels experienced the highest numbers and proportions of vessels inspected between 2018 and 2025. Chinese Taipei conducted high

numbers of inspections and had a high proportion of their flagged vessels inspected, and Korea and China had the next highest number and proportion of their vessels inspected.

20. Longline fishing effort and the location of boardings and inspections since 2008 were distributed throughout the WCPFC Convention Area (see Figures 3 and 4).

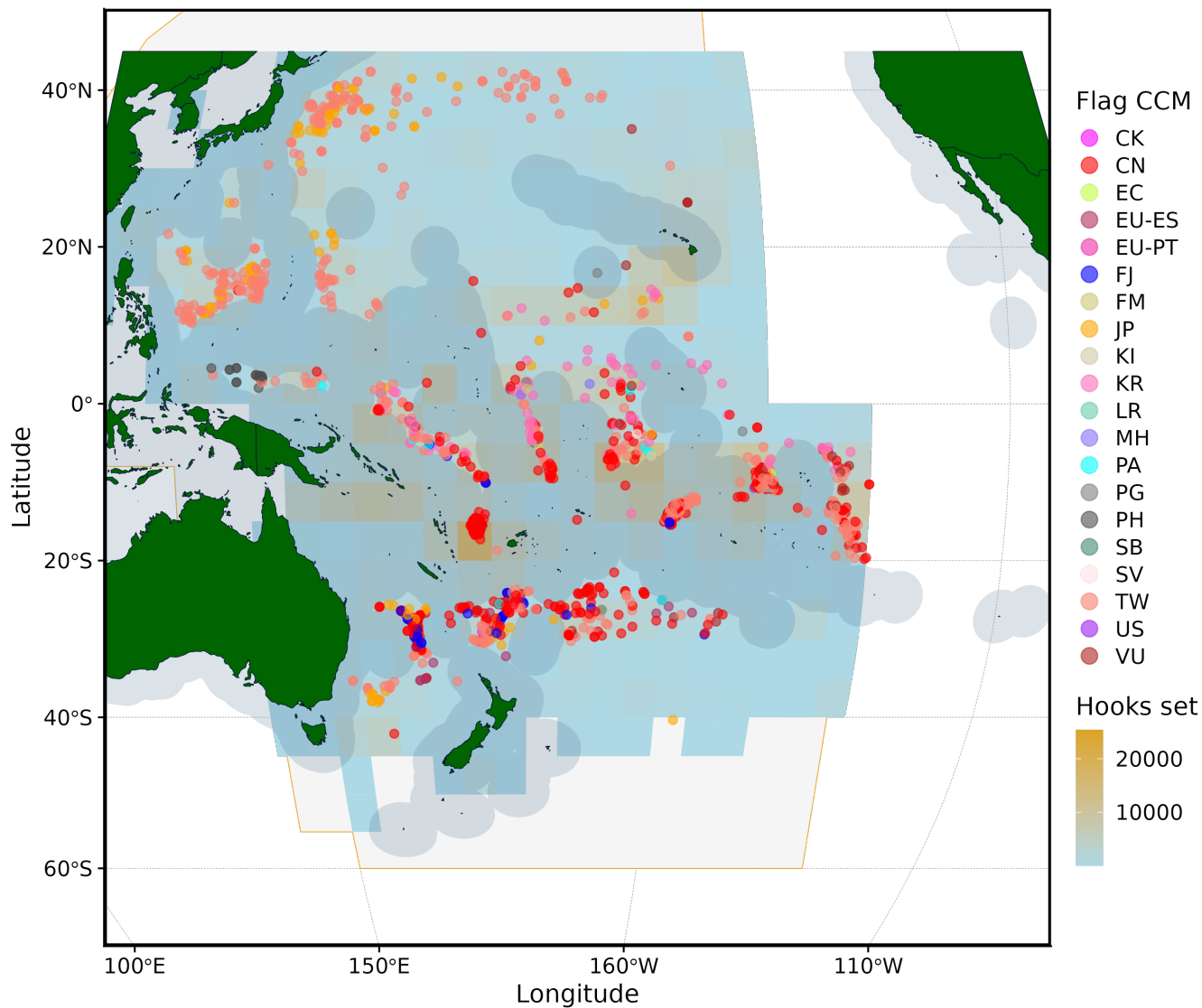


Figure 3: Location of all High Seas Boarding and Inspections conducted in the Convention Area since 2008. Shading represents the averaged surface-longline fishing effort in hooks (1000s) from 2016 to 2025.

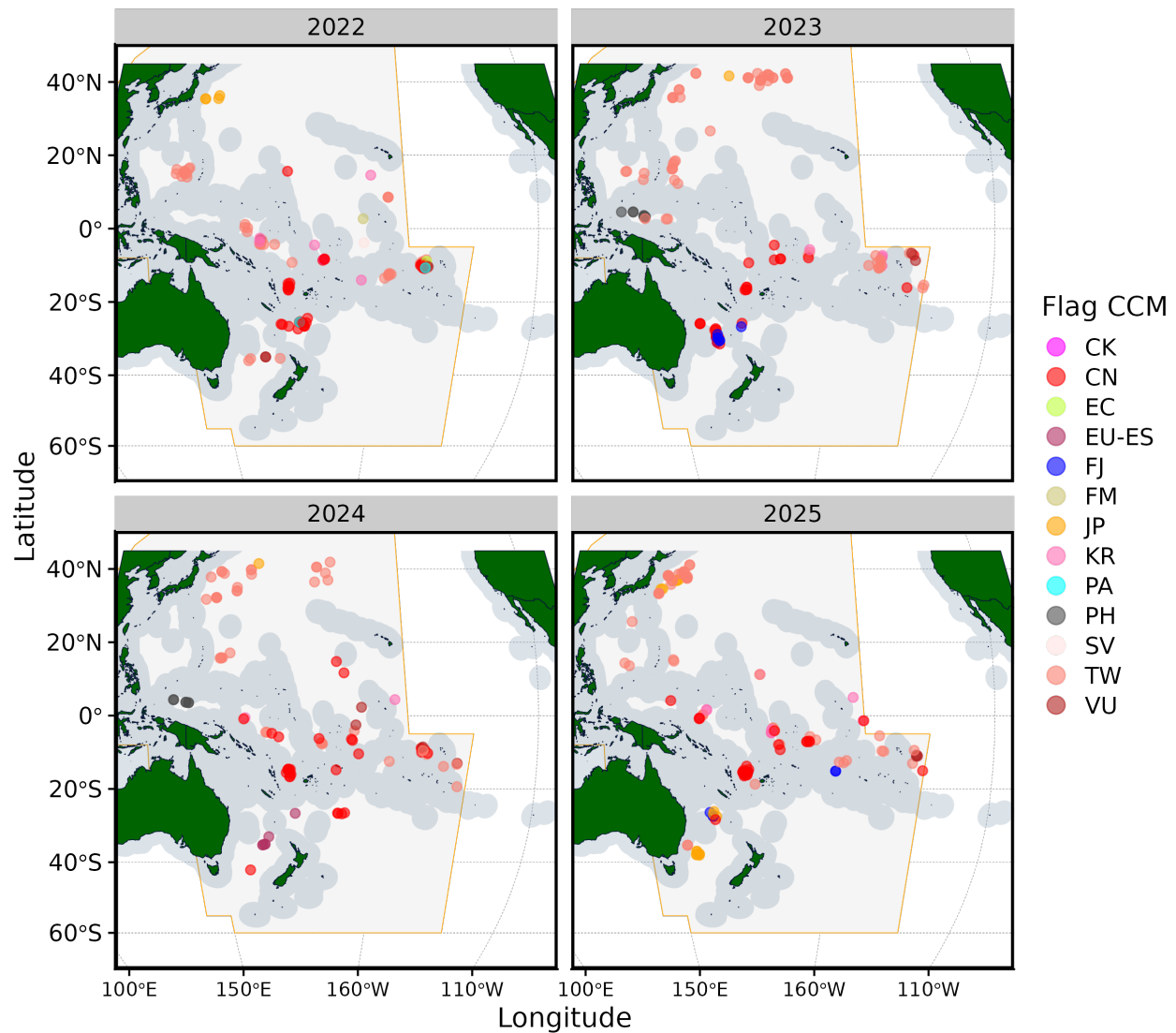


Figure 4: Distribution of all High Seas Boarding and Inspections in the Convention Area from 2022 to 2025.

Outcomes of HSBI activities including cases in the Compliance Case File System

21. HSBI activities undertaken by inspecting CCMs assist flag CCMs to monitor their vessels' compliance. Inspection outcomes can also highlight where further interventions may reduce the likelihood of future non-compliance (see information on infringement types in Tables 3 to 5).

Table 3: Information on number of infringements noted by vessel type from inspections between 2008 and 2026 in the WCPFC Convention area.

Vessel type	No infringements	Infringements noted	Serious infringements noted	Percent with no infringements	Percent with infringements noted	Total
Bunker	1	1	0	50.00	50.00	2
Fish carrier	18	5	2	72.00	28.00	25
Longliner	798	497	126	56.16	43.84	1421
Pole and line	16	5	0	76.19	23.81	21
Purse seiner	23	8	0	74.19	25.81	31
Support vessel	3	2	5	30.00	70.00	10

Table 4: Information on number of infringements noted by boarding CCMs from inspections between 2008 and 2026 in the WCPFC Convention area.

Boarding vessel flag	No infringements	Infringements noted	Serious infringements noted	Percent with no infringements	Percent with infringements noted	Total
Australia	18	48	11	23.38	76.62	77
Canada	15	38	13	22.73	77.27	66
Cook Islands	24	11	0	68.57	31.43	35
France	292	215	9	56.59	43.41	516
Japan	7	13	0	35.00	65.00	20
Korea (Republic of)	14	0	0	100.00	0.00	14
New Zealand	69	97	7	39.88	60.12	173
Chinese Taipei	3	0	0	100.00	0.00	3
United States of America	417	96	93	68.81	31.19	606

Table 5: Information on number of infringements noted by Boarded Vessel CCM from inspections between 2008 and 2026 in the WCPFC Convention area. Zeros indicate that no infringements were noted during inspections.

Boarded vessel flag	No infringements	Infringements noted	Serious infringements noted	Percent with no infringements	Percent with infringements noted	Total
Belize	1	0	0	100.00	0.00	1
China	278	165	19	60.17	39.83	462
Chinese Taipei	319	248	86	48.85	51.15	653
Cook Islands	1	0	0	100.00	0.00	1
EU-Portugal	2	0	0	100.00	0.00	2
EU-Spain	9	5	0	64.29	35.71	14
Ecuador	1	0	0	100.00	0.00	1
El Salvador	0	1	0	0.00	100.00	1
Federated States of Micronesia	3	0	0	100.00	0.00	3
Fiji	29	20	7	51.79	48.21	56
Japan	75	26	15	64.66	35.34	116
Kiribati	2	2	0	50.00	50.00	4
Liberia	0	1	0	0.00	100.00	1
Marshall Islands	3	0	0	100.00	0.00	3
Panama	8	1	0	88.89	11.11	9
Papua New Guinea	1	0	0	100.00	0.00	1
Philippines	7	7	6	35.00	65.00	20
Korea (Republic of)	91	8	0	91.92	8.08	99
Singapore	1	0	0	100.00	0.00	1
Solomon Islands	1	0	0	100.00	0.00	1
United States of America	2	1	0	66.67	33.33	3
Vanuatu	25	33	0	43.10	56.90	58

22. The proportion of HSBI events that resulted in Article 25 (2) case files was significantly reduced in 2020 and 2021 (see Annex D, Figures D-1 and D-2).
23. As expected, the reduction in inspections resulted in a corresponding reduction in alleged infringements (Figure 5). However, it is evident that inspections in 2020 and 2025 have, on average, resulted in fewer alleged infringements (see more information in Figure D-1, i.e, a summary of the number, status and, where completed, the outcome of cases by theme between 2013 and 2025; information on the specific CMMs associated with those cases is provided in Figure D-2). During the COVID-19 period (2020–2022), inspection times were shortened and the scope of inspections more limited to reduce health risks for both the crew and the boarding party. This is likely to have led to lower detection rates. In more recent years, however, it is unclear whether the decline is due to changes in inspection protocols to focus more on specific areas of risk that limit the overall scope of an inspection, or whether it reflects improved compliance by vessels, or a combination of the two.
24. The majority of inspections did not result in the detection of any alleged infringements. This is shown by HSBI reports for the flag CCM of the inspected vessel (Figure E-1) and inspecting CCM (Figure E-2).

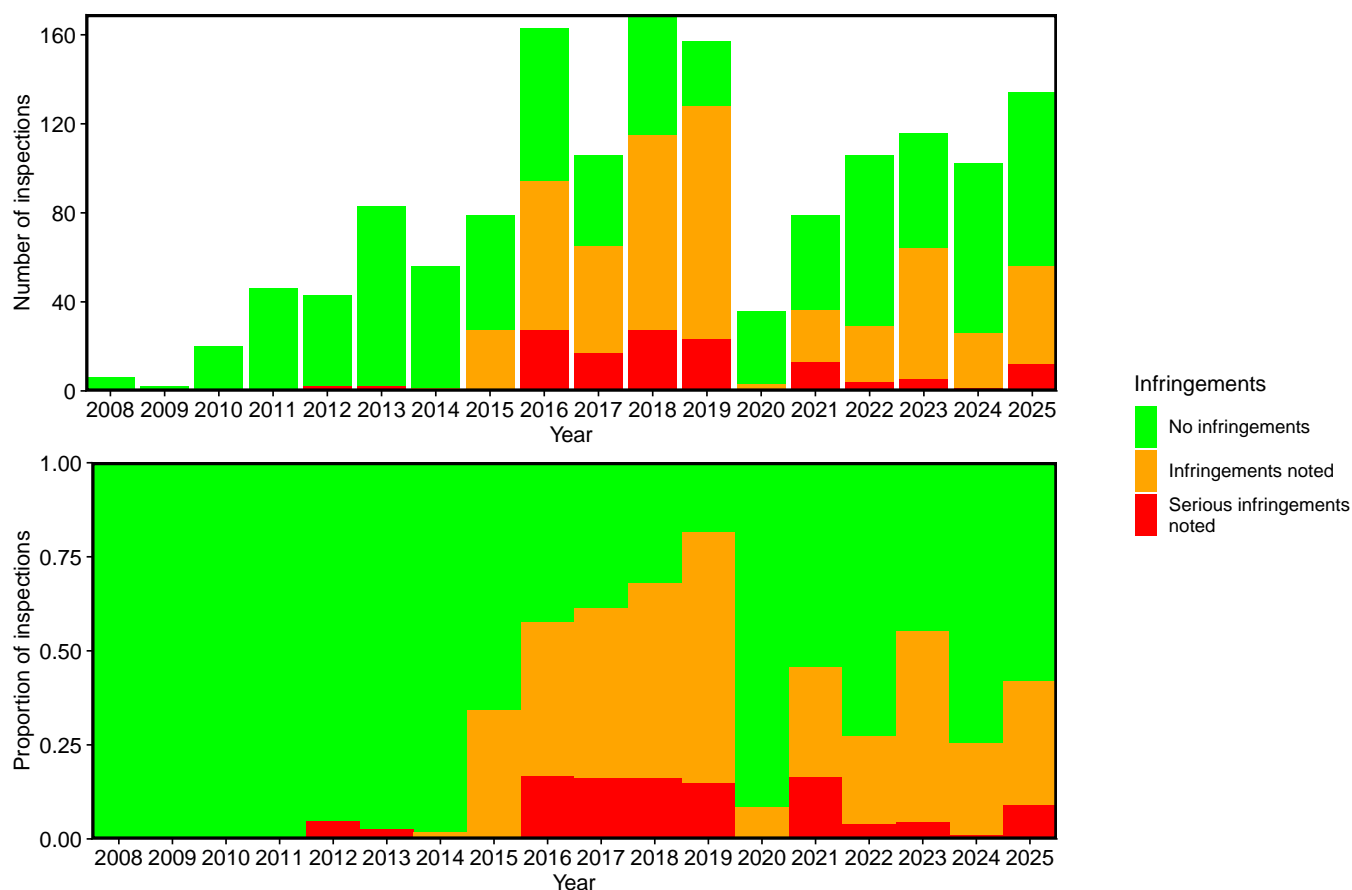


Figure 5: Number (top) and proportion (bottom) of HSBI events that resulted in reports of potential infringements.

25. The Compliance Case File System (CCFS) tracks HSBI events that resulted in a request for flag CCM investigation pursuant to Article 25(2) of the Convention. Before the release of the upgraded CCFS in March 2022, one boarding and inspection event was recorded as one case file in CCFS, which could include one or more alleged infringements. After March 2022, each alleged infringement is recorded as a separate case file. This means that a single boarding and inspection event may now result in multiple case files in CCFS.
26. Relevant documentation associated with each case is only accessible to CCMs with an interest in the case i.e. the inspecting CCM and flag CCM and, where relevant, the coastal State and/or Regional Observer Programme observer provider.
27. The number of cases of alleged infringements arising from HSBI between 2008 and 2025 is shown in Table 4 and Table 5. The tables also show whether cases are still under investigation and, if completed, the outcome of the investigation. There are thirty-nine (39) alleged infringements between 2021 and 2025 that remain as new cases and fifty-nine (59) still under investigation. These cases are awaiting updates on the investigation from flag CCMs, including any outcomes or judgements reached. Figure D-1 and Figure D-2 provide more detail on the specific obligations, and the outcomes of investigations of alleged CMM infringements identified in HSBI reports pursuant to Article 25(2) between 2013 and 2025 and between 2016 and 2025, respectively.

CCM feedback on HSBI operational outcomes

28. Some CCMs shared findings from their operational MCS activities with the Secretariat (some of this information is reflected in the alleged infringements in CCFS as shown in Figures D-1 and D-2). However, there are additional insights on issues that currently may not result in the generation of a case file which, in 2025 and 2026 included:
 - a. vessel markings were non-compliant or may have been obscured;
 - b.tori lines for mitigating seabird capture were regularly non-compliant and rarely used;
 - c. there were no de-hookers on board to help reduce the risk of injury to turtles during their release;
 - d. breaches of storage of retained shark carcasses and fins affecting inspections and catch reports not reflecting crew statements of sharks caught and released;
 - e. suspected under-reporting of catch;
 - f. crew, captain, and/or vessel owner information inconsistent with the RFV;
 - g. no incinerators present but little garbage on board; and
 - h. poor crew/labour conditions.
29. These issues are not quantified; however, these reports assist in highlighting:
 - a. possible issues that can undermine the objective of a CMM;
 - b. process issues that require CCMs to ensure up to date data, e.g., on the RFV; or
 - c. the potential need for CMM review, or the need to refresh some operator's awareness of their obligations.

Intersessional process to develop HSBI guidelines

30. In December 2024, the Commission agreed at WCPFC21 that Australia would lead an [intersessional process](#) to develop voluntary regional guidelines for the use of tools that support HSBI activities.
31. The following five guidelines were adopted by the Commission at WCPFC22 and complement CMM 2025-07 and other related CMMs that address HSBI obligations. They can be found on the [CMM webpage](#) by filtering for the topic "HSBI" or the reference 2025-07:
 - i. DNA testing guide.
 - ii. Weight estimation guide.
 - iii. Measuring tool calibration guide.
 - iv. Bycatch mitigation measuring guide.
 - v. Photograph and video evidence guide.
32. As tasked by the Commission, during 2026, the adopted Bycatch mitigation measuring guide is being updated to reflect changes to seabird bycatch mitigation in the new [CMM 2025-05](#), and a new guide based on [CMM 2024-04](#) Crew Labour Standards is also being developed.
33. The development of these guidelines is based on existing HSBI protocols used by CCMs in the Convention Area. The goal is to establish core principles and minimum voluntary standards for each tool, promoting consistency across inspections. These standards are intended to support, not replace, more detailed national inspection

requirements of individual CCMs. Participants in the intersessional process are also considering updates to the 2019 version of the Standardised multi-language questionnaire. More information is available for CCMs [here](#).

CCMs reporting on implementation of CMM 2006-08

Reporting through Annual Report Part 1 and Annual Report Part 2

34. This report is being released before the 2026 deadline of Annual Report Part 1 (July 7) and before a thorough review of Annual Report Part 2 covering 2025 activities could be conducted, so the most recent reporting by CCMs on HSBI was through Annual Report Part 2 covering 2024 activities.¹ (see Figure 6). Where significant data changes are identified from the Annual Report Part 2 for RY2025, an updated report containing this new data will be issued prior to TCC22.

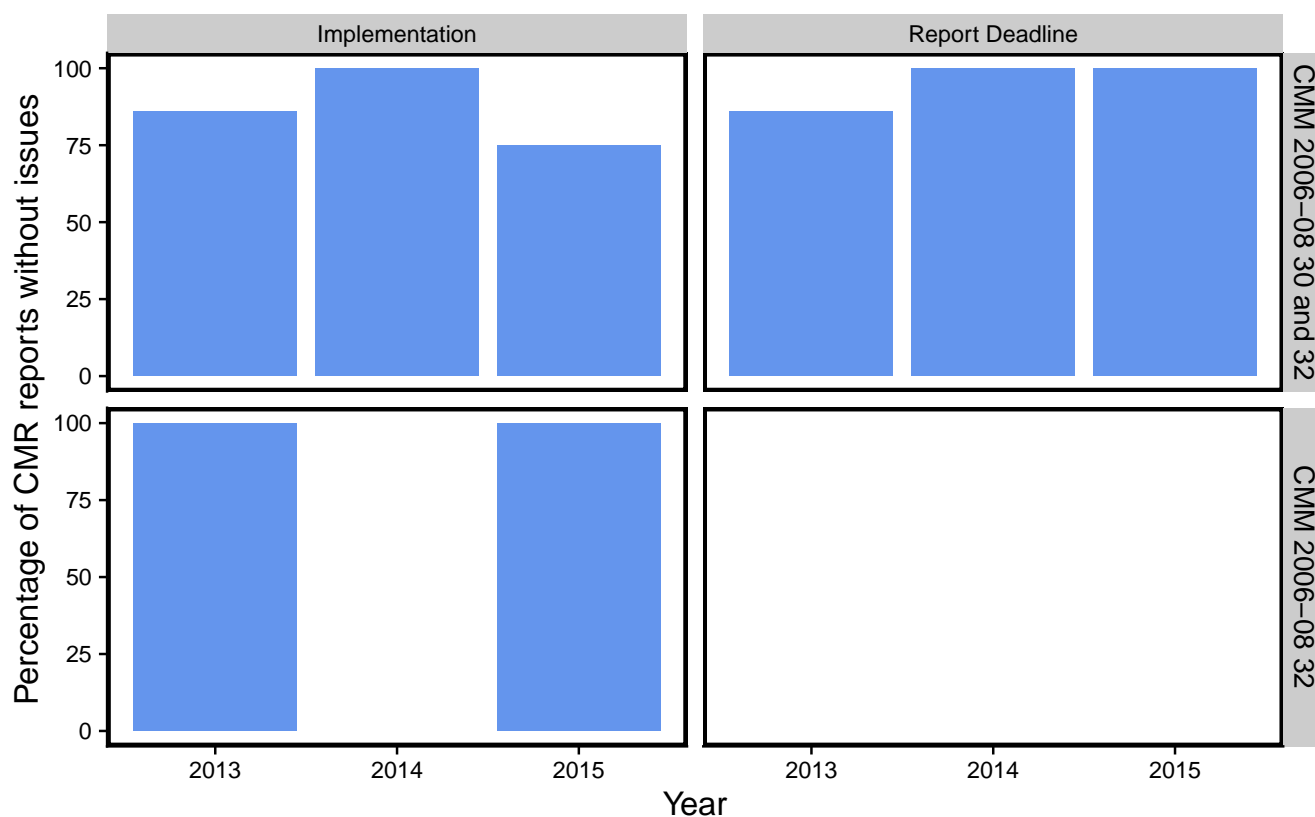


Figure 6: CMR compliance score for High Seas Boarding and Inspection related obligations for each year assessed.

Review of implementation by applicable CCMs under the Compliance Monitoring Scheme (CMS) RY2013-2015

35. Implementation reviews give an overview of the outcome of the evaluation of CMM 2006-08 under the CMS over the years they have been assessed. The general trend reflects improved implementation of the required reporting by applicable CCMs, with most obligations fully implemented by RY2015.
36. No reviews of HSBI obligations occurred under the CMS between RY2015 and RY2023. One implementation obligation (CMM 2006-08 07) was reviewed for RY2024 and 5 obligations are to be reviewed in 2026 for RY2025 (paragraphs 07, 30 and 32, 33 and 36, 40, and 41).

¹CCMs can view these responses by logging into the Monitoring and Evaluation webpage Reporting facility (<https://cmm.wcpfc.int/reporting/0>)

Annex A: Number of Vessels Inspected

Table A-1: Number of vessels that "fished" and that were inspected by CCM for each year from 2020 to 2025. "Fished" status is not available for 2025 at the time this paper was prepared.

Flag CCM	Year	Vessels that fished	Vessels inspected	Proportion inspected (%)
Australia	2020	4		
	2021	7		
	2022	9		
	2023	15		
	2024	8		
Canada	2021	1		
China	2020	375		
	2021	365	5	1.37
	2022	367	38	10.35
	2023	355	25	7.04
	2024	358	33	9.22
	2025		29	
Cook Islands	2020	19		
	2021	18		
	2022	14	1	7.14
	2023	8		
	2024	6		
Curacao	2020	1		
	2021	1		
	2024	1		
EU-Spain	2020	5		
	2021	10		
	2022	10		
	2023	12		
	2024	12	3	25.00
	2025		1	
Ecuador	2020	5		
	2021	5		
	2022	5	1	20.00
	2023	5		
	2024	5		

Continued on next page

Table A-1: Number of vessels that "fished" and that were inspected by CCM for each year from 2020 to 2025. "Fished" status is not available for 2025 at the time this paper was prepared.

Flag CCM	Year	Vessels that fished	Vessels inspected	Proportion inspected (%)
El Salvador	2020	2		
	2021	2		
	2022	2	1	50.00
	2023	2		
	2024	2		
Federated States of Micronesia	2020	42		
	2021	45		
	2022	41	1	2.44
	2023	41		
	2024	38		
Fiji	2020	34		
	2021	23		
	2022	15		
	2023	26	6	23.08
	2024	20		
	2025		3	
Indonesia	2024	1		
Japan	2020	440		
	2021	499	9	1.80
	2022	391	4	1.02
	2023	385	1	0.26
	2024	381	1	0.26
	2025		13	
Kiribati	2020	12		
	2021	13		
	2022	17		
	2023	14		
	2024	15		
Liberia	2020	2		
Marshall Islands	2020	15		
	2021	16		
	2022	13		
	2023	13		
	2024	12		

Continued on next page

Table A-1: Number of vessels that "fished" and that were inspected by CCM for each year from 2020 to 2025. "Fished" status is not available for 2025 at the time this paper was prepared.

Flag CCM	Year	Vessels that fished	Vessels inspected	Proportion inspected (%)
Nauru	2020	16		
	2021	15		
	2022	20		
	2023	24		
	2024	22		
New Zealand	2020	2		
	2021	3		
	2022	1		
	2023	3		
	2024	2		
Panama	2020	84		
	2021	95		
	2022	89	2	2.25
	2023	83		
	2024	79		
Papua New Guinea	2020	17		
	2021	13		
	2022	4		
	2023	3		
	2024	12		
Philippines	2020	262		
	2021	286	2	0.70
	2022	164		
	2023	244	7	2.87
	2024	255	6	2.35
Korea (Republic of)	2020	159		
	2021	149	4	2.68
	2022	144	5	3.47
	2023	150	4	2.67
	2024	146	2	1.37
	2025		12	
Solomon Islands	2020	3		
	2021	3		
	2022	3		
	2023	9		
	2024	4		

Continued on next page

Table A-1: Number of vessels that "fished" and that were inspected by CCM for each year from 2020 to 2025. "Fished" status is not available for 2025 at the time this paper was prepared.

Flag CCM	Year	Vessels that fished	Vessels inspected	Proportion inspected (%)
Chinese Taipei	2020	607		
	2021	497	35	7.04
	2022	505	36	7.13
	2023	504	46	9.13
	2024	498	35	7.03
	2025		38	
Tuvalu	2020	4		
	2021	7		
	2022	7		
	2023	7		
	2024	6		
United States of America	2020	183		
	2021	182		
	2022	173		
	2023	168		
	2024	159		
Vanuatu	2020	71		
	2021	66	3	4.55
	2022	62	5	8.06
	2023	64	2	3.12
	2024	56	4	7.14
	2025		3	

Annex B: Inspection reports

16

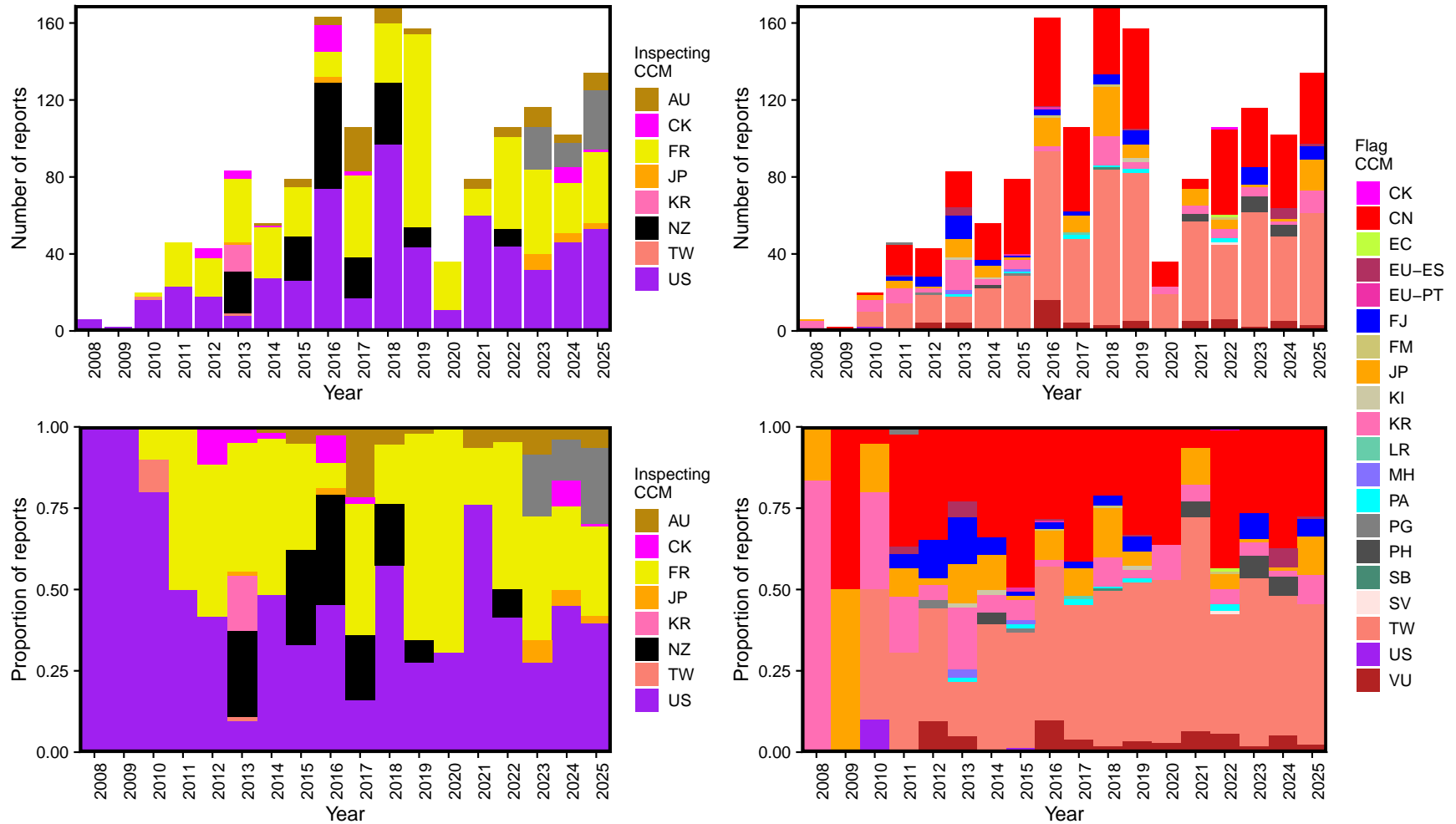


Figure B-1: The number of inspection reports received (top) and the proportion of boarding reports (bottom) by inspecting CCM (left) and by the flag of the inspected vessel (right).

Annex C: Inspection report number summary

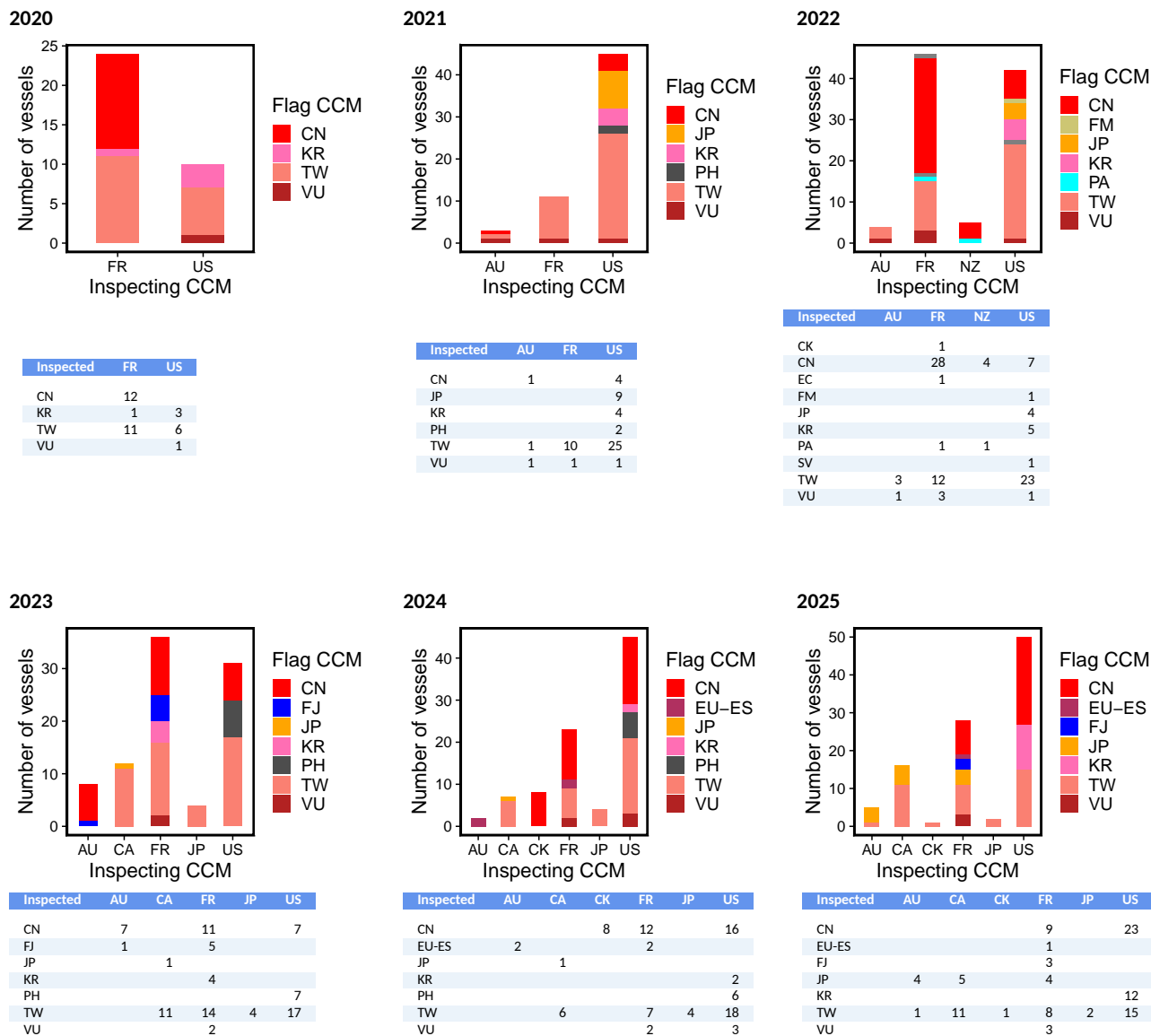


Figure C-1: Summary of the number of inspection reports received from each inspecting CCM and the flag CCM of the vessel inspected for each year in 2020 and 2025

Annex D: Compliance Case File System (CCFS) data

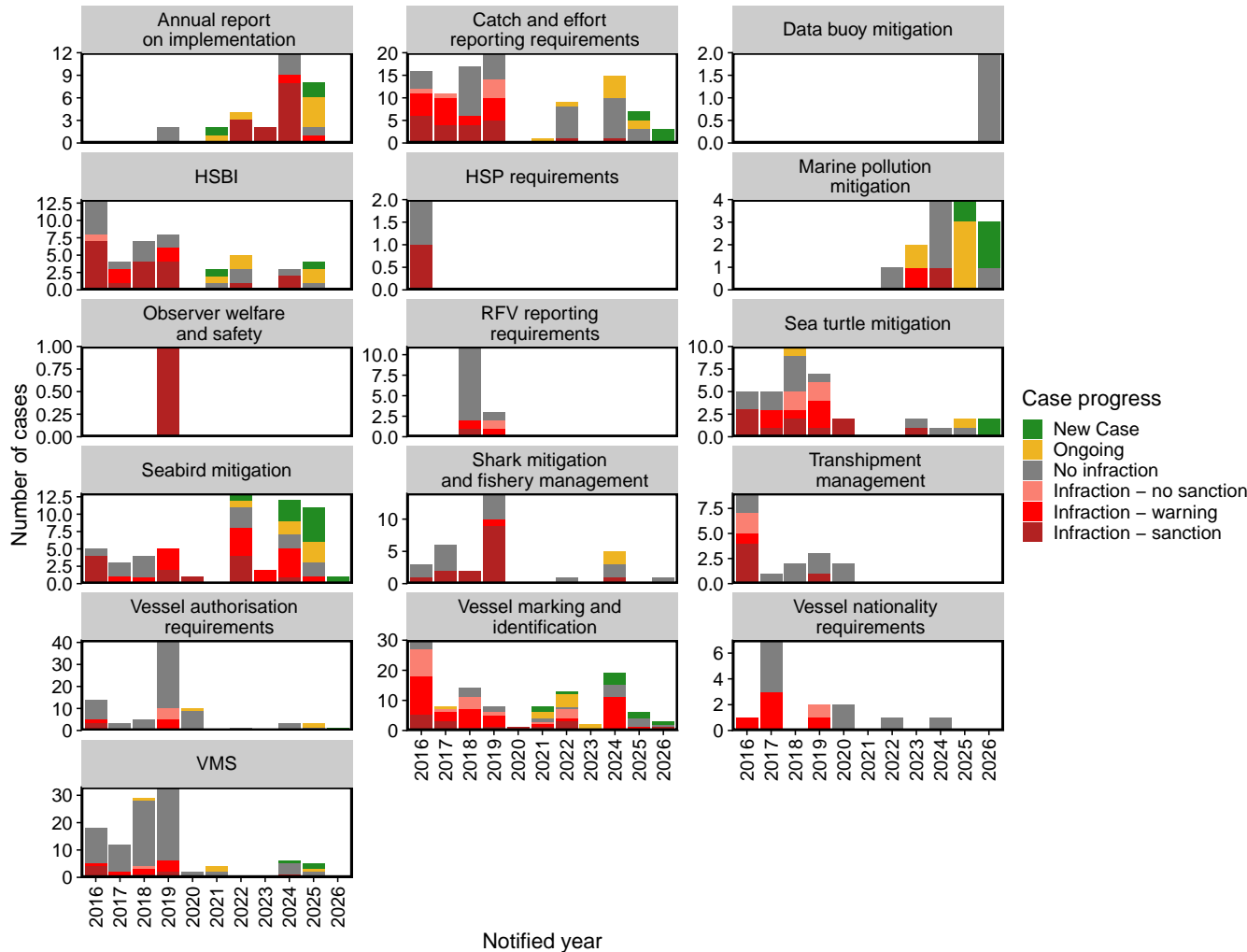


Figure D-1: Summary of the themes and number of cases relating to alleged infringements from High Seas Boarding and Inspection between 2016 and 2026, and whether cases are still under investigation and, if completed, the outcome of the investigation.

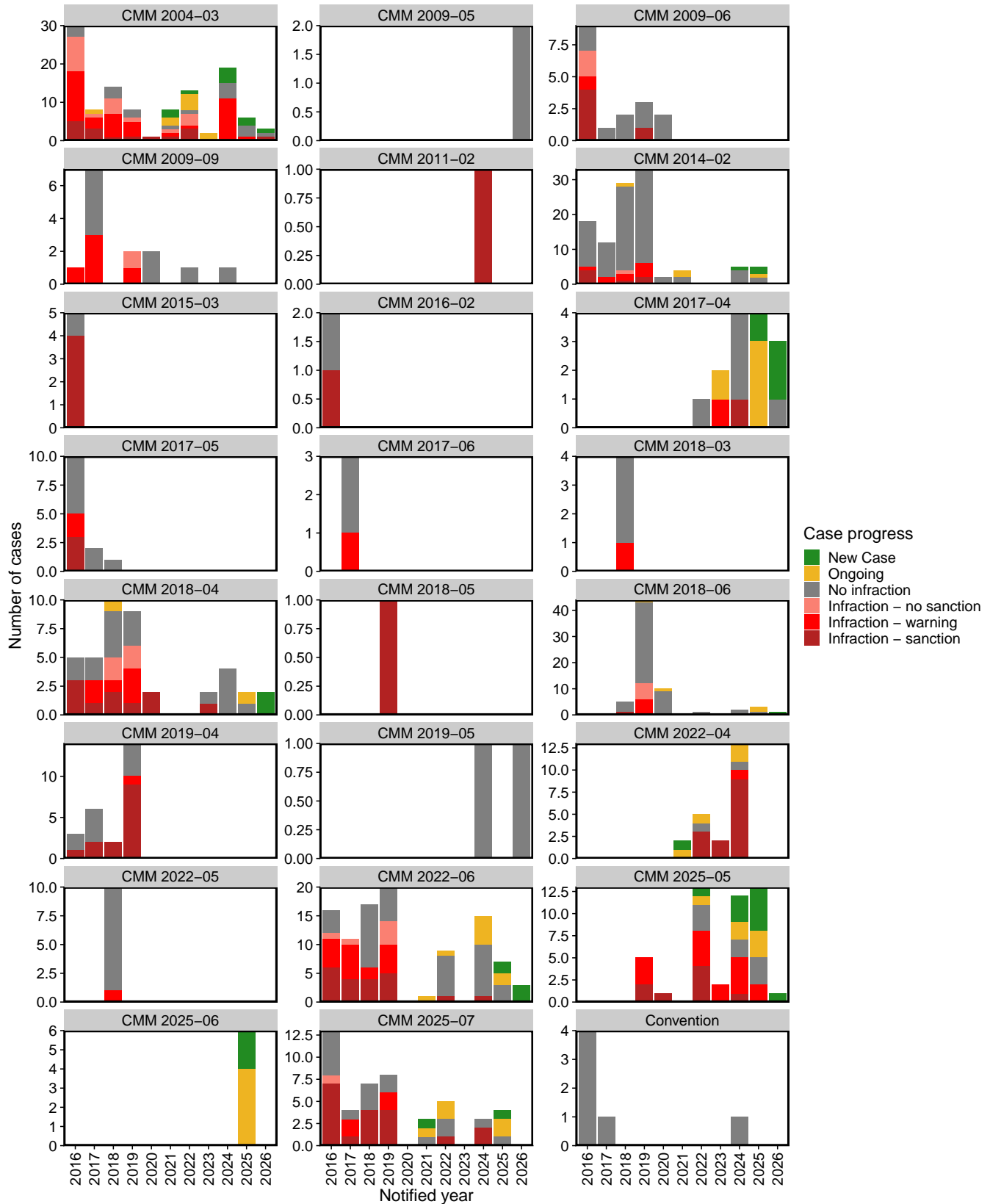


Figure D-2: Summary of the outcomes of investigations of specific obligations where there have been alleged infringements identified in High Seas Boarding and Inspection reports that have resulted in a request for flag State investigation pursuant to Article 25(2) between 2016 and 2026.

Annex E: Alleged infringements

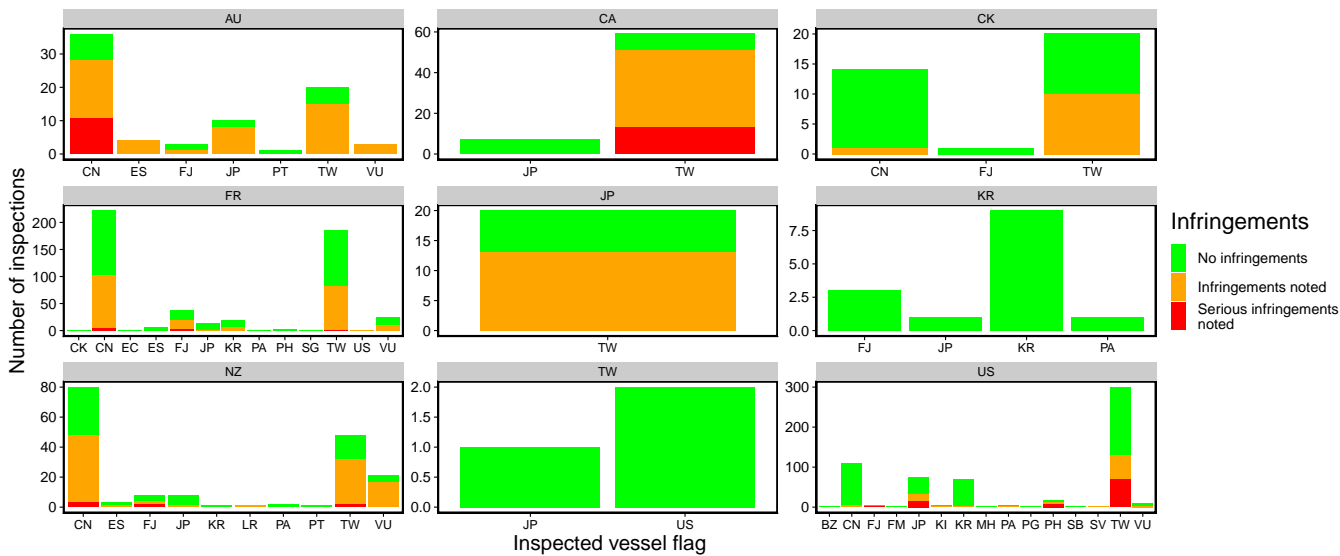


Figure E-1: High Seas Boarding and Inspection information from 2008 to 2026, showing the number of alleged infringements detected by inspecting CCM on the flag CCM. (Note, these numbers do not reflect the number of vessels but the number of alleged infringements noted during an inspection.)

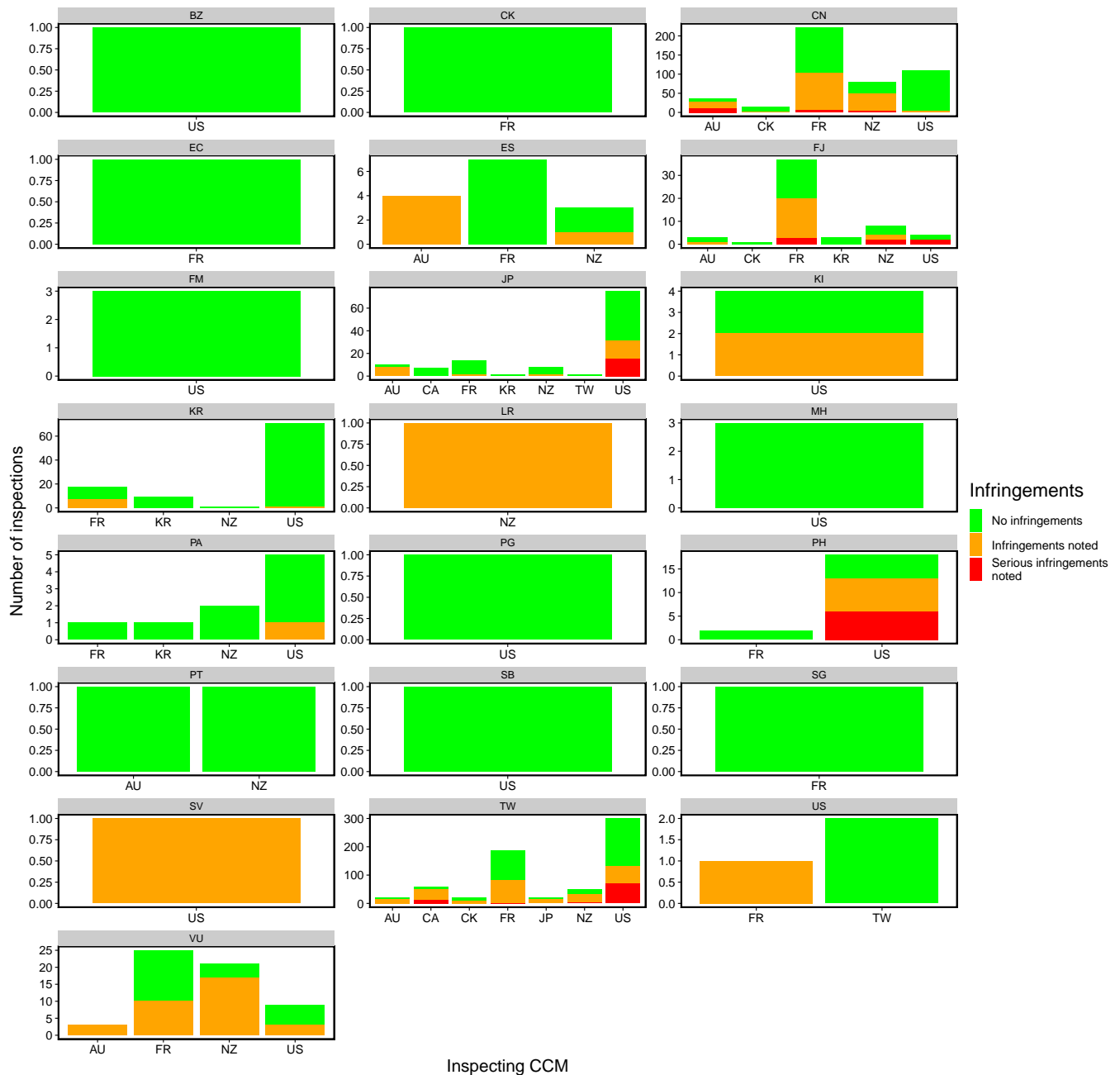


Figure E-2: High Seas Boarding and Inspection information from 2008 to 2026, showing the number of alleged infringements detected on flag CCMs by inspecting CCM. (Note, these numbers do not reflect the number of vessels but the number of alleged infringements noted during an inspection.)