



منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
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Organización
de las
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Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

COORDINATING WORKING PARTY ON FISHERY STATISTICS

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Report by SPC

I. Introduction

The Oceanic Fisheries Programme (OFP) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) is responsible for compiling and disseminating data on tuna fisheries in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO), shown in Figure 1. The data compiled by the OFP Statistics and Monitoring Section are used primarily for monitoring trends in catch and effort, and for research conducted by the OFP Stock Assessment and Modelling Section, the Tuna Ecology and Biology Section, and by external scientists. The main types of data compiled by the OFP are described below:

- Annual catch estimates for the WCPO are compiled by gear type, fishing nation, and major species of tuna and billfish, but not other non-target species. The estimates are scientific estimates that are either provided by the fishing nation or determined from logsheet and landings data held by the OFP. Discards are included for the United States purse-seine fleet only. The fleets covered are generally industrial vessels; small-scale fisheries, including recreational, are currently being incorporated into the database.
- Operational-level catch and effort data (longline and purse-seine sets; pole-and-line and troll days fished) covering most industrial gear types and fishing nations in the WCPO are provided by SPC member countries and territories. Catches of non-target species and discards are not usually covered.
- Catch and effort data grouped by time-area strata (5° latitude by 5° longitude and month for longline and troll; 1° latitude by 1° longitude and month for pole-and-line and purse seine) are provided by non-SPC member fishing nations (e.g. Japan, Republic of Korea and Chinese Taipei).
- The OFP conducted two large-scale tagging programmes, from 1977 to 1980 and from 1989 to 1992, during which 317,412 skipjack, yellowfin and other species were tagged throughout the tropical and sub-tropical western and central Pacific from pole-and-line vessels. A total of 27,000 tags have been returned, giving an overall return rate of 8.5 percent. The OFP has not conducted a tagging programme since 1992, although tags continue to be returned.
- Port sampling data and unloadings data covering 27 ports are provided by 13 SPC member countries and territories.
- Observer data are collected by OFP scientific observers and observer programmes in eight SPC member countries and territories.
- Other types of data compiled by the OFP include biological data (morphometric data, stomach contents, gonad indices, otolith ring counts, etc.), oceanographic and meteorological data and vessel and gear attributes.

The OFP Statistics and Monitoring Section also provides technical support to SPC member countries and territories for in-country fisheries database systems and national port sampling programmes and observer programmes.

II. Agenda Item 5(a). Progress report from each member organisation

A. COMPILATION OF ANNUAL CATCH ESTIMATES

Compilation of annual catch estimates from Indonesia and the Philippines, which represent about 20 percent of the catch of pelagic tuna in the WCPO, continues to be problematic. However, the situation is expected to improve with the Indonesia and Philippines Data Collection Project,

which has been developed by the Preparatory Conference for the Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific, and managed by SPC. Funds contributed by the United States of America and Chinese Taipei are being used for port sampling by the National Research and Development Institute and commercial and municipal landing surveys by the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics in the Philippines during 2005 and 2006. Additional funds may be raised to establish a port sampling programme in eastern Indonesia in 2006.

B. COMPILATION OF OPERATIONAL CATCH AND EFFORT DATA

The compilation of operational (logsheet) data has not changed during the current reporting period. However, it is expected that the newly-established Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (see below) will require all of its members to provide operational catch and effort data. If so, then SPC, who will provide scientific services to the Commission, including data management, will compile operational data from the non-SPC members (such as Japan, republic of Korea and Chinese Taipei), in addition to the SPC member countries and territories, which already provide operational data.

C. ARCHIVAL AND CONVENTIONAL TAGGING DATA

The OFP continues to deploy archival and pop-up satellite tags on an opportunistic basis.

The Standing Committee on Tuna and Billfish recommended at its seventeenth and final meeting, held in Majuro, Marshall Islands from 9 to 18 August 2004, that a large-scale tagging programme be developed for the WCPO. The project may be adopted by the Commission and funding sought from Commission members and other sources.

D. PORT SAMPLING PROGRAMMES AND OBSERVER PROGRAMMES

The OFP continues to compile port sampling data and observer data that are collected by national programmes; however, for the WCPO, coverage remains only 15 percent for port sampling programmes and less than 4 percent for observer programmes.

The OFP provides both financial and technical support for sampling programmes in member countries and territories. In this regard, three OFP staff work with national coordinators in SPC members, several of whom funded by the OFP.

The Sixth Meeting of the SPC/FFA Tuna Fishery Data Collection Committee was held from 16 to 20 November 2004 in Brisbane, Australia. The meeting reviewed data collection forms, the status of sampling programmes, and sampling protocols.

E. WCPO TUNA BULLETIN AND SPC TUNA FISHERY YEARBOOK

It was reported to at CWP-20 that the WCPO Tuna Bulletin, which presents monthly catch and effort statistics for certain fleets, would be published only on the SPC/OFP website and no longer be made available in hardcopy. The same decision has been taken in regard to the SPC Tuna Fishery Yearbook. Both are available via the link below:

<http://www.spc.int/oceanfish/docs/statistics/index.asp>

F. WESTERN AND CENTRAL PACIFIC FISHERIES COMMISSION

The Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean was adopted at Honolulu on 5 September 2000 and came into force on 19 June 2004. The objective of the Convention is to ensure, through effective management, the long-term conservation and sustainable use of highly migratory fish stocks in the WCPO. The inaugural meeting of the Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific — the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) — was held from 9 to 10 December 2004 in Pohnpei,

Federated States of Micronesia. The following attended the session as members of the Commission and participating territories: Australia, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Chinese Taipei, Tokelau, Tonga and Tuvalu. The following attended as observers: Canada, European Community, France, French Polynesia, Indonesia, Japan, New Caledonia, Palau, Philippines, United States of America, Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna.

Among other decisions taken at the inaugural meeting, the Commission adopted the recommendation of the Preparatory Conference that the headquarters of the Commission shall be in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia. With respect to the appointment of an Executive Director of the Commission, the Contracting Parties decided that, in accordance with the recommendation of an interview panel, the preferred candidate for the position would be Mr Michael Lodge.

Dr Sung Kwon Soh of the Republic of Korea — previously Chairman of the Standing Committee on Tuna and Billfish until the SCTB ceased to exist at the close of its seventeenth and final meeting in August 2004 — was elected Chairman of the Scientific Committee. The Scientific Committee will hold its inaugural meeting from 8 to 19 August 2005 at SPC headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia. The working groups of the Scientific Committee will be the same as those for the SCTB, e.g., Statistics, Methods, Fishing Technology, Stock Assessment, Biology, and Ecosystem and Bycatch. The working group coordinators will be the same as those for the working groups at SCTB17; hence, Mr Tim Lawson will be coordinator of the Statistics Working Group.

The Scientific Committee will address several data-related tasks at its inaugural and subsequent meetings, including:

1. Draft the terms of reference of the Statistics Working Group.
2. Draft a resolution on the scientific data to be provided by members of the Commission.
3. Draft a resolution on the principles and procedures for the dissemination of scientific data by the Commission.
4. Advise the Commission regarding the contents of an annual report on the status of the collection, compilation and dissemination of data to be provided by the Commission's data managers.
5. Monitor the status of data collection in the Philippines and the Pacific Ocean waters of Indonesia.
6. Develop a strategy for improving the capacity of members to meet the data requirements of the Commission.
7. Establish standards for the collection of scientific data, including operational catch and effort data, port sampling data and observer data.
8. Advise the Commission regarding the scientific aspects of the regional observer programme to be developed under Article 28 of the Convention.
9. Establish procedures for evaluating the quality of the scientific data compiled by the Commission.
10. Harmonise data collection standards for the Western and Central Pacific Ocean and the Eastern Pacific Ocean in collaboration with the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission.
11. Establish an agreement on the exchange of tuna fisheries data between the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission and the Commission.
12. Harmonise the procedures for the compilation and dissemination of data by the Commission and the Interim Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-Like Species in the North Pacific Ocean.
13. Recommend that the Commission become a member of the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics.
14. Recommend that the Commission become a partner in the Fisheries Resources Monitoring System.

The SPC Oceanic Fisheries Programme will play a key role in the scientific work of the Commission during the transitional period (expected to last some three to five years and representing the period between the Convention coming into force and a fully functioning Commission), including data management. An assessment of the costs and benefits of utilising the capabilities of the OFP for providing the data management functions of the Commission during the transitional period and in the long-term will be conducted.

As data manager for the Commission, the OFP will be responsible for compiling tuna fisheries data for the Commission's Convention Area, also shown in Figure 1.

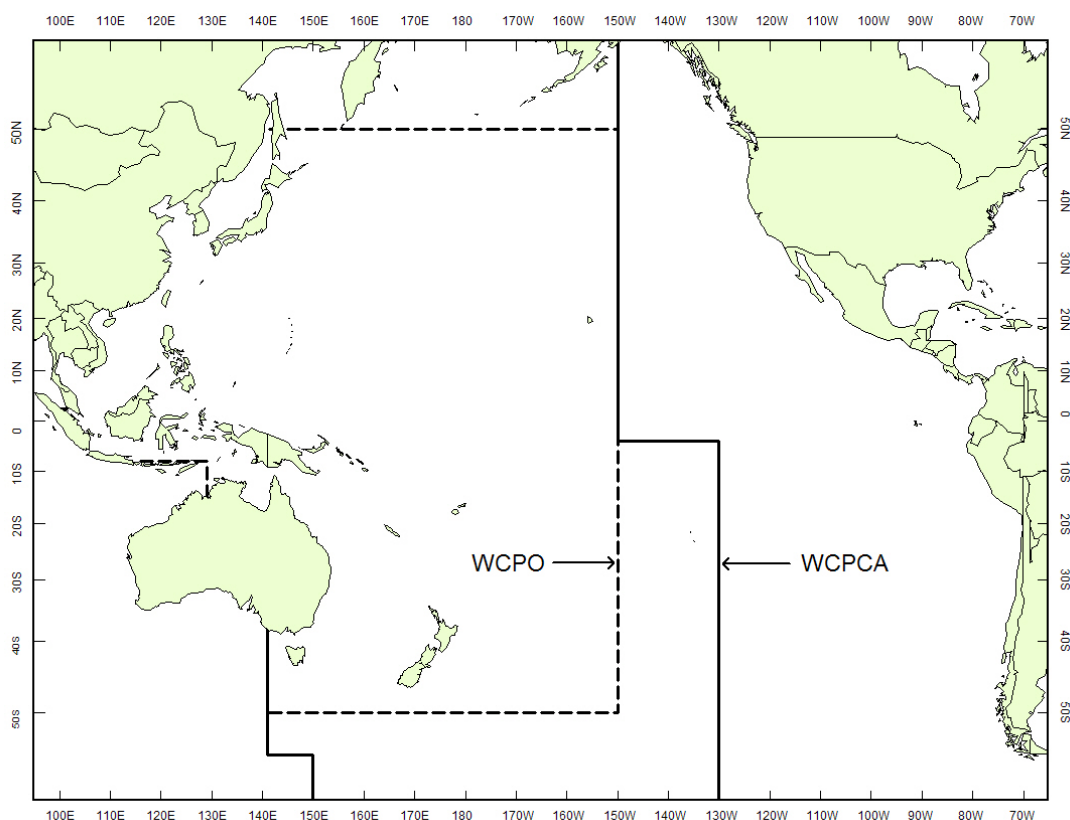


Figure 1. The Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) area established for statistical purposes by the Standing Committee on Tuna and Billfish, and the Convention Area of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPCA)