



**Report of the workshops on Biodegradable FADs
in General Santos (Philippines) and Majuro (Marshall Islands)
26th June- 1st of July**

**Gala Moreno and Jefferson Murua
July 2019**

Following the series of workshops on biodegradable FADs that ISSF has been conducting with the support of FAO, Common Oceans ABNJ Tuna project, 2 workshops were organized in Philippines (General Santos) and Marshall Islands (Majuro). Previous workshops were organized in Europe, with attendees from the Eastern Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans. This is the first time that workshops on biodegradable FADs are held with the fleets operating in the Western Pacific Ocean. The WCPFC has established a regulation for non-entangling FADs which will soon come into effect in 2020 and although the conservation measure in place (CMM 2018-01) does not refer to any specific materials, it states: “To reduce the amount of synthetic marine debris, the use of natural or biodegradable materials for FADs should be promoted. The use of non-plastic and biodegradable materials in the construction of FADs is encouraged.”

Further, this CMM provides that at its 2020 annual session, the Commission shall consider the adoption of measures on the implementation of non-entangling and/or biodegradable material on FADs.

The objective of the workshops is to promote the use of non-entangling and biodegradable FADs in the fleets operating in the Western Pacific Ocean. The agenda of the workshop is in Appendix 1. The workshops allowed ISSF scientists to present the latest results on biodegradable FAD initiatives in the Indian, Atlantic and Eastern Pacific Oceans and gather feedback from the fleets in the Western Pacific on the type of FADs used, the difficulties that could be encountered when changing the structure of their FADs and how to best proceed with experimental work to test and find non-entangling biodegradable FADs that are productive for fishing in the WCPO.

The workshop in General Santos (Philippines) was held with representatives from Philippines, Korea, Federated States of Micronesia and Papua New Guinea. The list of attendees is in Appendix 2. A total of 32 participants attended (4 women and 28 men), the different stakeholders, from fishing masters and shipowners to fishing association’s chairman and WTPO representatives made the discussion very rich, facing the issue from different perspectives. In Majuro (Marshall Islands) most of the 9 attendees (1 women and 8 men) were fishing masters or skippers or fleet managers and discussions were more technical on FAD structures in the region.

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One of the early conclusions of the workshops is that still the fleets in the Western Pacific have not started using or testing non-entangling FADs despite WCPFC regulation for non-entangling FADs coming into effect by 2020. Although most fishers have not tried alternative designs yet, some companies are starting to purchase small mesh netting (e.g. < 2.5 inch) from small pelagic fisheries to construct their non-entangling FADs.

Regarding biodegradable FADs, despite the fact that a number of natural fibers have been used traditionally in the Philippines to build anchored FADs, FADs are made of plastic derived materials. The region is rich in vegetal fibers (Manila hemp, jute, balsa wood, coconut fibers, etc) and up to not so long-ago small PS vessels have been using natural-fiber ropes for the FADs' anchoring lines. However, now all use polyethylene or polypropylene ropes.

Given the diversity of the fleets in the Western Pacific and the fact that fishers are difficult to reach in that area, due to the long periods they stay at sea, there is a need to devote special efforts to promote the use of non-entangling and biodegradable FADs, both through workshops and tests at sea.

Upcoming work related to biodegradable FADs

This project comprised 3 workshops to outreach fleets from the Western Pacific. The 3rd workshop on biodegradable FADs will be held in Croatia the last week of August or first week of September, depending on the availability of the fishers. The workshop will be held in Croatia due to the availability of fishers in Zadar (Croatia) homeland of most of the fishers operating from Pohnpei in Federated States of Micronesia. It was agreed with the ship-owner that would be easier to reach them in Europe as well as more cost-effective.

Upcoming Deliverables from the 3 workshops

Once the 3 workshops are completed, the following deliverables are expected:

- Technical report on workshops held with the fleets in the Western Pacific Ocean
- Video on the workshops
- Visual report of the workshops and visit to port in the Western Pacific region.

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Appendix I – Agenda of the Workshop on Biodegradable FADs

08:30 -12:00

Opening, house rules, remarks and welcoming (Representatives from Philippines or the fishing industry, Gala Moreno, Jefferson Murua)

1. Presentation on the impacts of FAD structure on the ecosystem.
2. Presentation of potential solutions: non-entangling and biodegradable FADs and recovery of FADs
3. Ongoing experiences in other Oceans

10:00-10:30 Morning tea

4. Discussions on:
 - What are the essential features of a productive FAD, for the fleets in Philippines?
 - Life time of a FAD in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean
 - The cost of a FAD
 - Strategy fishing with FADs in the Western Pacific Ocean

12:00-13:30 Lunch Break

13:30-16:30

5. Working in groups to:
 - Design biodegradable FADs: selection of materials and designs
 - Design a potential protocol to test them: identify main difficulties and potential solutions to test them successfully
6. Questionnaire to be filled by fishers on biodegradable FADs
7. Summary and conclusions

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**Appendix II –
Participant Lists ISSF Skipper Workshop General Santos
(Philippines) 26th-27th June 2019**

Name	Profession	Vessel	Company
Johard Salamatih	Skipper	Purple Beauty	Frabelle
Gil Oltaido	Officer	Purple Beauty	Frabelle
Damilo Bacomo	Skipper	Purple Beauty	Frabelle
Wabi Basay	Dock Manager		RR Fishing
Neil Del Rosario	Manager		RR Fishing
Sergio Jr Sardoma	Radio Operator		RR Fishing
Rafael L. Lapitan	Operations Manager		RR Fishing
Michael Gumanac	Officer		RD Fishing
Ryan Banguis	Skipper		RD Fishing
Elmer J. Soner	Skipper		RD Fishing
Edward Coloso	Researcher		RD Fishing
Donald Papaol	Executive Secretary		FIA
Roy Gabinete	Executive Assistant		Frabelle
Floyd Tiu Laurel	Ship-owner		Frabelle
Alex Bernardino	Executive		MSY
Karen Joy Obero	HR Staff		MSY
Benthly Sabulo	Fisheries Officer		NFA-PNG
Rhodelyn Leysa	Operations		RD Fishing
Juanito Inocencio	Fishing Master		TPJ Fishing
Richard Remandaban	Fishing Master		TPJ Fishing
Nory O. Eleserio	Scientist		BFAR
Mark Jayson Josh	Researcher		RD Fishing
Marcel Chiu	Secretariat		WTPO
Sylvester Pokajam	Chairmam		FIA PNG
Esteban Pollescash	Skipper	D-101	RD Fishing Industry
Shalimar Abdirahman	Project Officer		SFFAI
Vincent G. Ma	Skipper		MSVC
Evan Luis Alaban	Skipper		MSVC
Jose Ronald Jumikaren	Officer		MSVC
Marko Kamber	Ship-owner		CFC
Lawrence Org	Manager		Hoch
Siseno Pagalan	Manager		TPS

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**Participant Lists ISSF Skipper Workshop Majuro (Marshall Islands)
1st of July 2019**

Name	Profession	Vessel	Company
Bruce Robson	Skipper	Marielle	CFC
Mario Radulic	Skipper	Marielle	CFC
Deng Zhao Wong	Skipper	Wnkak	PPF
Pan Jun Jie	Fleet Manager		SHANGHAI KAICHUANG DEEP SEA FISHERIES CO.
Cheng Xu Li	Fleet Manager		PPF
Orion Hernandez	Skipper	Mathawmarfach	Diving Seagull
Berry Muller	Fisheries Manager		MIMRA
Beau Bigler	Fisheries Manager		MIMRA
Jose Luis Zamora	Skipper	Salomon Topaz	NFD

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Appendix III – ISSF Skipper Workshop General Santos and Majuro 2019 group photo



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Annex III – Power point presentation of the biodegradable FAD workshops

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