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

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TOKELAU



GOVERNMENT OF TOKELAU

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TOKELAU ANNUAL REPORT TO THE WCPF COMMISSION FOR 2010

Part 1. (Information on Fisheries, Research and Statistics)

INTRODUCTION

Tokelau is in the process of developing its tuna management capacities. Key initiatives include strengthening the capacities of the Department of Economic Development, Natural Resources and Environment; reviewing of the National Tuna Development and Management Plan; reviewing of the Vessel Licensing regimes through legislation, establishing a Statistical Database; and the continuous upgrading of the national facility for the operation of the FFA VMS.

1. ANNUAL FISHERIES INFORMATION.

Tuna Fisheries in Tokelau includes two elements.

1.1 National Fleet – Artisanal Tuna Fishery.

This fleet comprises of small aluminium boats/dingies ranging from 12 – 16 ft in length with power outputs ranging from 15 – 30hp outboard motors. These boats fish primarily for local consumption using troll and handline methods targeting mainly skipjack and yellowfin tuna and

depending on the abundance of tuna surface feeding schools, traditional pole fishing is sometimes used.

The majority of tuna handline fishing occurs at all hours of the day around specific fishing sites and a little around FADs targeting yellowfin and bigeye using locally available baitfish mainly big eye scad (*Selar crumenophthalmus*), flying fish (*Exocoetus volitans*) and yellowtail scad/atule mate.

Trolling occurs mainly in the early hours of the mornings and in the late afternoons targeting surface feeding schools of both skipjack and yellowfin.

All artisanal fishing activities in Tokelau waters occur within 4 nautical miles from shore.

Domestic fisheries development in Tokelau is severely constrained by market access and lack of infrastructure, and the Government is committed to developing strategies that will provide opportunities for Tokelauans to participate in small-scale commercial tuna fishery developments.

Due to lack of data collected from the artisanal fishery, the following table however provides an estimated annual catch and effort by the Tokelau artisanal fleet from 2002 to 2009.

The newly developed SPC Artisanal Catch Forms will be introduced to the artisanal fishers to be used in the future and translation of this form into Tokelauan has already begun for easier use and reference by the fishers.

YEAR	BOATS	SIZE_GRT	CATCH_MT		
			SKJ	YFT	BET
2002	29	0-10	5	2	0.9
2003	28	0-10	2	1	0.1
2004	30	0-10	2	1	0.2
2005	30	0-10	5	1	0.5
2006	35	0-10	4	1.5	0.5
2007	42	0-10	6	2	0.5
2008	46	0-10	6	2	0.2
2009	54	0-10	8	2.5	1

Table 1. Annual artisanal catch and effort estimates from 2002 – 2009.

1.2 Coastal State Reporting – Foreign Purse-Seine and Longline fishing.

Offshore fishery is currently undertaken by foreign fishing vessels of distant water fishing nations and neighbouring Pacific Island States.

Vessels licensed in recent years include New Zealand purse-seiners and United States purse-seiners under the Treaty (USMLT), and a small number of Chinese Taipei, United States and Vanuatu longline vessels have also fished in Tokelau waters as recently as 2007.

The levels of fishing by these vessels and revenues generated from foreign fishing vessel licensing have fluctuated substantially over the last few years.

Tokelau does not have the capacity to flag fishing vessels thus there are no Tokelau flagged fishing vessels.

There are no port, wharfage and mooring infrastructure and facilities in Tokelau to cater for transshipment, port sampling and for the processing of large-scale commercial tuna catches thus all catches by foreign licensed vessels are offloaded outside Tokelau.

Logsheet data for the United States purse-seine vessels under the Treaty are obtained from SPC and data for the New Zealand purse-seine vessels can also be obtained from the SPC pending Tokelau requesting NZ to authorise SPC to release these data to Tokelau.

Logsheet data for the foreign flagged longliners that have been licensed by Tokelau have not been able to be obtained due to lack of capacity and resources both human and financial however, it is envisaged that the review of the vessel licensing regimes will strengthen the reporting obligations in the conditions of the licenses.

The following table (Table 2), shows the annual catch and effort levels in Tokelau waters by commercial fishing vessels for the period 2002 to 2009. All catches reported in this table are by US flagged purse-seine vessels licensed under the Treaty.

YEAR	BOATS	DAYS	SKIPJACK		YELLOWFIN		BIGEYE		TOTAL	
			MT	CPUE	MT	CPUE	MT	CPUE	MT	CPUE
2002	27	350	5,359	15.3	570	1.6	53	0.2	5,983	17.1
2003	11	24	28	1.2	34	1.4	0	0	62	2.6
2004	15	62	765	12.3	243	3.9	4	0.1	1,012	16.3
2005	15	115	4,256	37	90	0.8	0	0	4,346	37.8
2006	9	32	869	27.2	150	4.7	0	0	1,019	31.8
2007	10	43	834	19.4	36	0.8	0	0	871	20.2
2008	13	129	3,575	27.7	235	1.8	135	1	3,946	30.6
2009	13	138	4,491	32.5	518	3.8	21	0.2	5,030	36.4

Table 2. Annual US purse-seine catches in Tokelau waters from 2002 to 2009.

Figures 1 and 2 shows the distribution of catch in Tokelau waters, by species, for the most recent years 2008 and 2009. The high levels of catch could be due mainly to the occurrence of the El Nino climatic phenomena around this region during those years, and the majority of the catch for both years is mainly skipjack with some yellowfin and bigeye.

Whilst Figure 1 shows the 2008 catch distribution to be concentrated mainly in Tokelaus waters in the west, Figure 2 shows the catches in 2009 to be evenly distributed.

Figure 3 shows the trends in total US PS catch levels, in metric tonnes per year per species, in Tokelau waters for the periods 2002 to 2009.

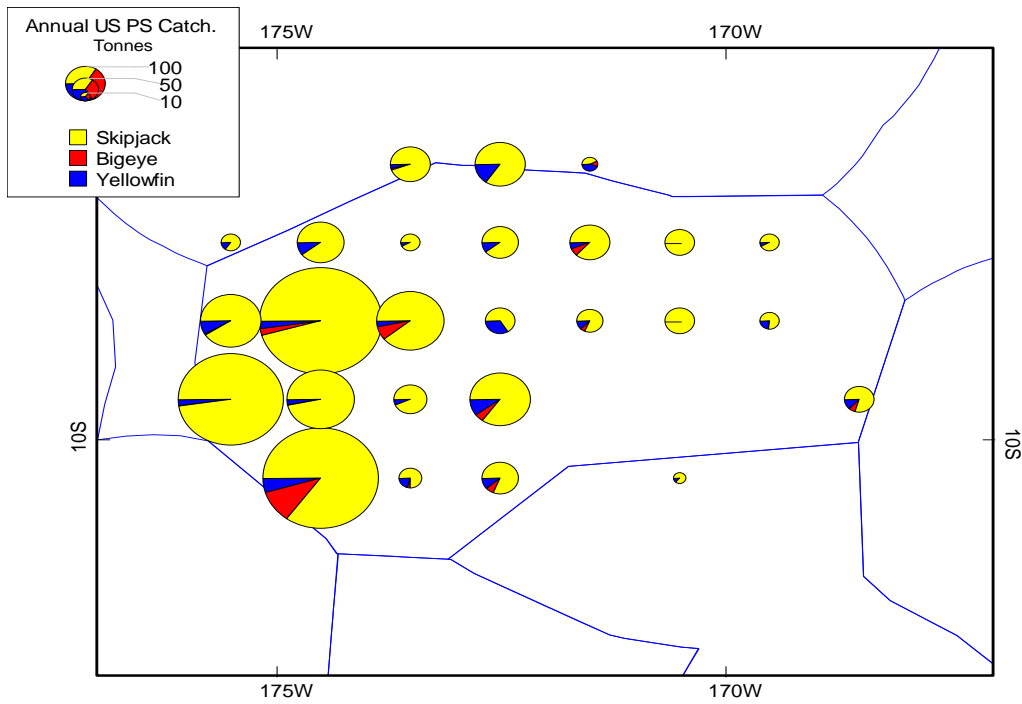


Figure 1. Distribution of US PS catches in Tokelau waters in 2008.

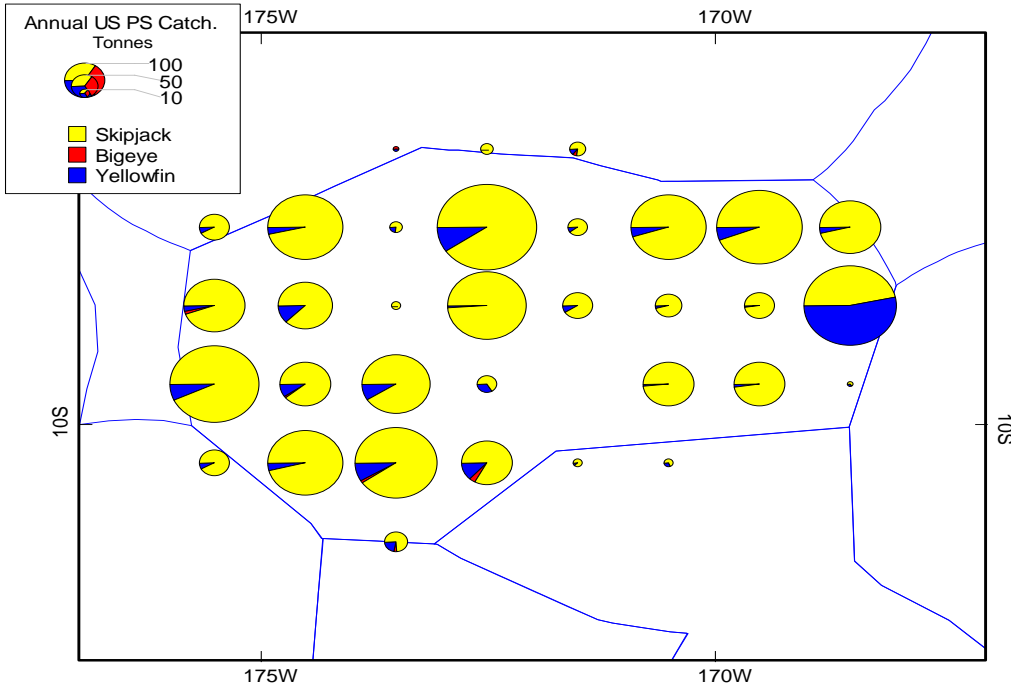


Figure 2. Distribution of US PS catches in Tokelau waters in 2009.

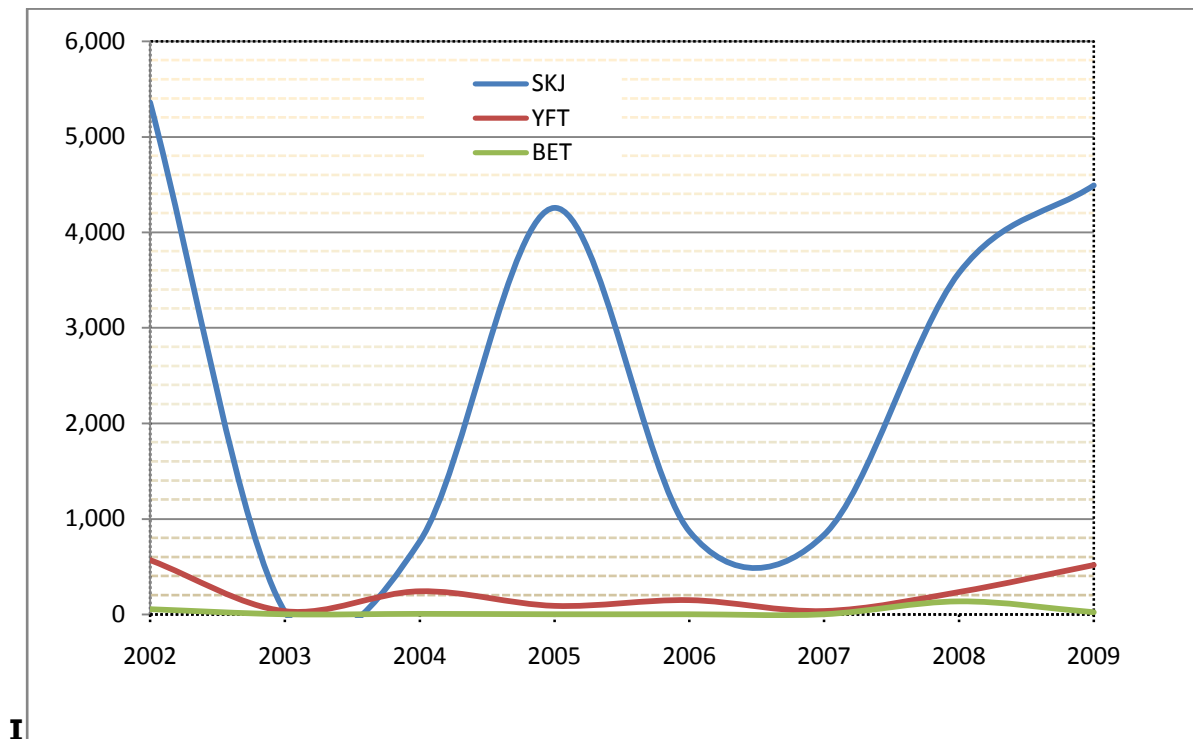


Figure 3. Trends in total US PS catches, in metric tonnes per year, in Tokelau waters for the periods 2002 to 2009.

2. RESEARCH AND STATISTICS.

Tokelau presently has a small fisheries administration with only three staff members currently committed full time to commercial fisheries management and other fisheries related tasks including trainings, workshops and meetings.

The tuna research and statistical needs of Tokelau are largely met by the assistance and support of the SPC Oceanic Fisheries Programme.

All foreign fishing vessels that are licensed to fish in Tokelau waters are required to carry an FFA approved Automatic Location Communicator (ALC) or Mobile Transmitting Unit (MTU) and whilst within Tokelau waters, they are monitored by the FFA installed Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) workstation which was installed in Tokelau in 2005.

Tokelau has yet to establish both an Observer and a Port Sampling Programme, and in our draft Sea and Fisheries Rules 2009, the establishment of an Observer Program is proposed and is expected to be implemented once these draft Sea and Fisheries Rules are approved and endorsed.

The lack of port and wharfage infrastructure and facilities to allow boarding & inspection and transshipment to be carried out in Tokelau is the major contributing factor to there being no port sampling programmes conducted in Tokelau.