



**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
FIFTEENTH REGULAR SESSION**

Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia
12-20 August 2019

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

WCPFC-SC15-AR/CCM-05

EUROPEAN UNION

EUROPEAN UNION
WCPFC ANNUAL REPORT PART I - YEAR 2018
PURSE SEINE AND LONG LINE FISHERIES

INDEX:

1.- PURSE SEINER FISHERY	2
1.1.- Annual catch and effort by primary species in the WCPFC Convention Area.	2
1.2.- Number of vessels by size.....	3
1.3.- Fishing patterns	4
1.4.- Estimated total catches of non-target, associated and dependent species.....	5
1.5.- Research and statistics	5
2. LONG LINE FISHERY	9
2.1. Annual catch and effort by primary species and gear in the WCPFC Convention Area..	9
2.2. Number of vessels by gear and size (fleet characteristic).....	9
2.3. Fishing patterns.....	10
2.4. Estimated total catches of non-target, associated and dependent species	12



EUROPEAN UNION

WCPFC ANNUAL REPORT PART I - YEAR 2018

PURSE SEINE AND LONG LINE FISHERIES

1. PURSE SEINER FISHERY

1.1. Annual catch and effort by primary species in the WCPFC Convention Area.

Fishing vessels operating in the eastern Pacific Ocean have 100% coverage of onboard observers, in line with the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP). Although this agreement applies to vessels operating in the IATTC Convention Area, the two EC-flagged purse seiners operating in the Pacific Ocean have carried out their activity in both the IATTC and WCPFC Convention Areas during 2018, and observers of the APICD have covered c. 82% of the catch in the WCPFC Convention Area. Information from trips not covered by observers of the APICD is obtained from logbooks. Total catches reported by the observers and estimated from logbooks, catches to the east of 150°W and discards of the three main target species during 2018, as well as in previous years, are shown in Table I.

	2018			
	WCPFC	WCPFC east of 150°W	Discards	No. Sets
BET	1189	78	3	
SKJ	8648	1111	115	201
YFT	404	24	9	

	2017				2016			
	WCPFC	east of 150°W	Discards	No. Sets	WCPFC	east of 150°W	Discards	No. Sets
BET	2686	20	47		2049	287	17	
SKJ	8027	111	55	159	6081	1462	170	102
YFT	628	23	3		378	105	4	

	2015				2014			
	WCPFC	east of 150°W	Discards	No.	WCPFC	east of 150°W	Discards	No.



	150°W			Sets	150°W			Sets
BET	1529	482	2		5591	187	8	
SKJ	30389	8490	356	459	31997	1560	225	655
YFT	1290	347	1		2866	154	0	

Table 1 Total catches (in metric tonnes) of BET, SKJ and YFT from EU purse seiners in the WCPFC convention area, in the WCPFC-CA east of the 150°W meridian, estimated discards and number of sets during the last 5 years.

1.2. Number of vessels by size

In 2018, 2 EU-Spain flagged purse seiners fished in the WCPFC-CA, with gross register tonnages of 1562 and 2502 GRT. Tuna are mainly caught by sets on FADs, but also on free schools. Catches are frozen onboard in salt vats. Table II summarizes the number of vessels and total gross register tonnages from the beginning of the fishery in the WCPFC-CA.

Year	GRT	No. vessels
1996	1351	1
1997	1351	1
1998	4419	3
1999	8176	4
2000	6887	4
2001	9172	4
2002	9172	4
2003	10678	5
2004	6532	3
2005	6532	3
2006	6532	3
2007	9732	4
2008	9732	4
2009	9732	4
2010	9732	4
2011	9732	4
2012	9732	4
2013	9732	4
2014	9732	4
2015	9732	4
2016	4064	2
2017	4064	2
2018	4064	2

Table 2 Number of EU purse seiners and total gross register tonnage in the WCPFC-CA by year.



1.3. Fishing patterns

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the catches (5° x 5°) of EU purse seiners in the WCPFC-CA during 2018 and the five previous years.

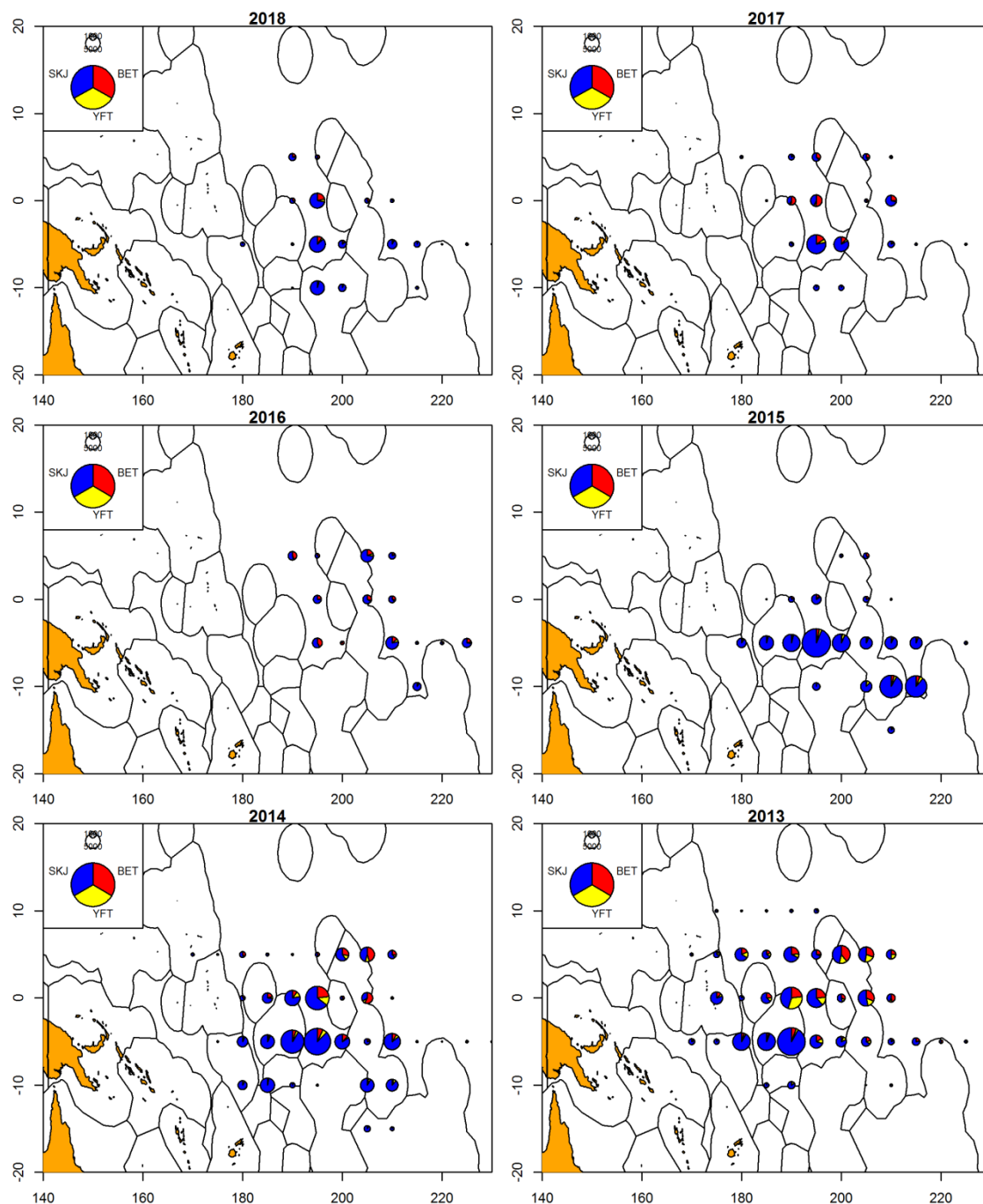


Fig. 1- Distribution of catches by area (5°x5°) and species in 2013-2018.

There has been no significant change in the distribution of the catch and effort as compared to previous years, with the exception of a slight increase of the activity in the



Cook Islands' EEZ. The percentage of bigeye in the catch showed a decrease, possibly linked to the slight shift in effort southwestwards and the weak El Nino levels observed by the end of the year.

1.4. Estimated total catches of non-target, associated and dependent species.

Tables III and IV summarize the purse seine bycatch by species in the WCPFC-CA in 2018 and 2017, respectively. In most cases, the observers only record the number of fish of each species per set. The total weight has been estimated by multiplying the number of fish in each size category (small, medium, large) by an average weight for the purse seine fishery provided by the IATTC (N. Vogel, pers. comm.).

In 2018, 6 species accounted for more than 92% of the bycatch, in terms of weight: Silky shark, blue marlin, dolphinfish, wahoo, black marlin and pompano dolphinfish.

Around 38% of the *Carcharinus falciformis*, the main bycatch species of the purse seine fleet, as well as 75% (3 out of 4 specimens) of the *C. longimanus* captured in 2018 were estimated to be released alive.

There is a mandatory Spanish protocol for releasing marine turtles caught by purse seine alive. All turtles involved in fishing operations must be released in the best conditions as soon as possible. Only one green turtle was involved in purse seine fishing operations within the WCPFC-CA in 2018, and was released unharmed.

1.5. Research and statistics

82 % of the catch in the WCPFC-CA, including bycatch, was monitored by IATTC and national program observers of the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP). Additionally, in keeping with the current CMMs, EU purse seiners fishing in the WCPFC-CA have 100% coverage of ROP observers. These observers also record information on size and species composition, vessel activity, bycatch, etc. However, this information is submitted directly to the Science Service Provider and not reported to the flag State, and is not included in the current report.

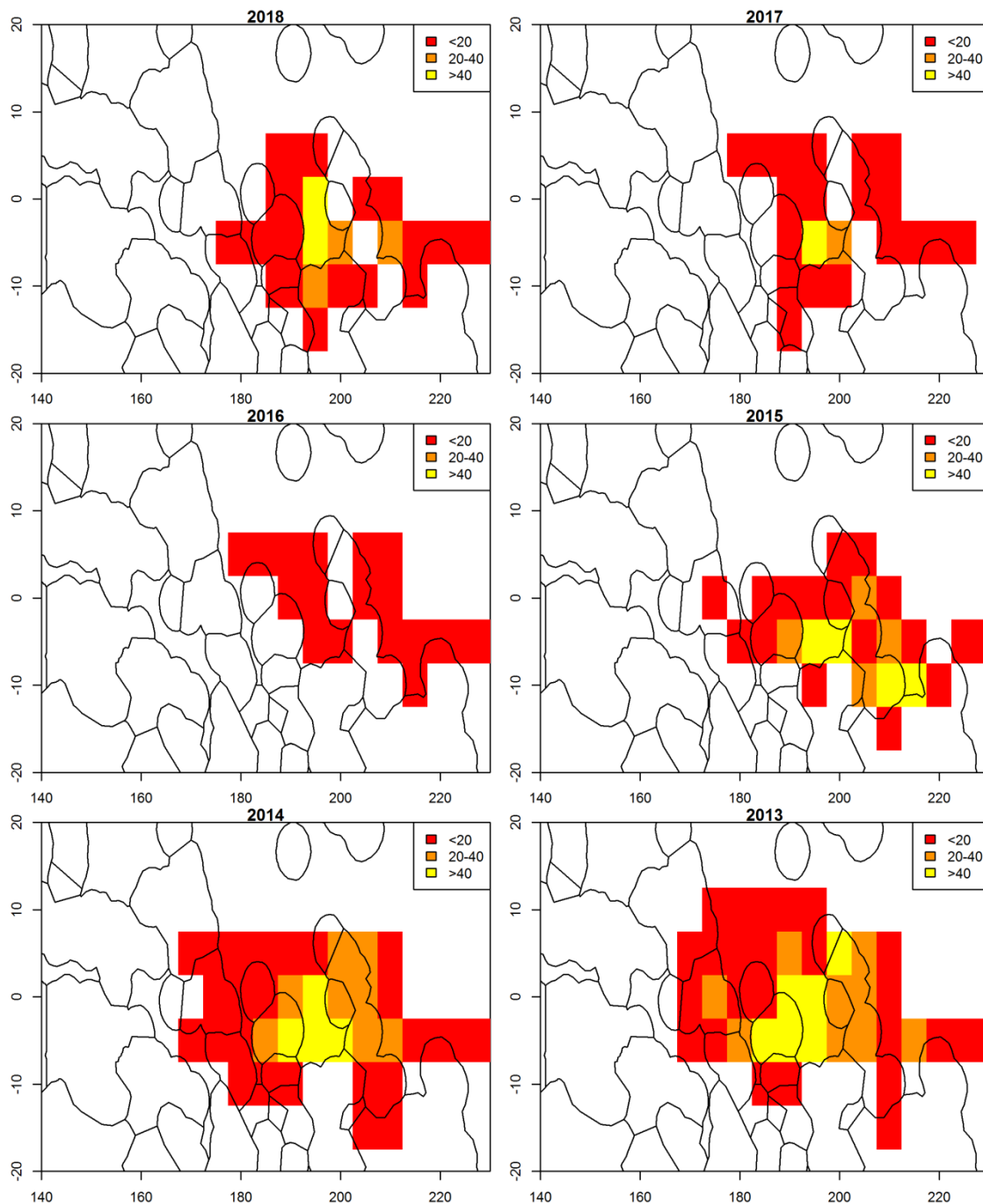


Fig. 2.- Distribution of the purse seine effort, in fishing days, by area (5°x5°) and year.



	Species	WCPFC	East of 150 ° W	
BILLFISH	<i>Istiompax indica</i>	1.14	0.00	
	<i>Makaira nigricans</i>	2.93	1.18	
	<i>Makaira, Tetrapturus</i>	0.50	0.03	
SHARKS & RAYS	<i>Carcharhinus falciiformis</i>	10.13	0.95	
	<i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i>	0.09	0.04	
	<i>Carcharhinus spp.</i>	0.10	0.00	
	<i>Pteroplatytrygon violacea</i>	0.01	0.00	
	<i>Sphyrna spp.</i>	0.09	0.00	
	OTHER FISH	<i>Ablennes hians</i>	0.03	0.03
		<i>Acanthocybium solandri</i>	2.28	0.48
<i>Canthidermis maculatus</i>		0.02	0.02	
<i>Caranx sexfasciatus</i>		<0.01	0.00	
<i>Caranx spp.</i>		<0.01	0.00	
<i>Coryphaena equiselis</i>		1.03	0.00	
<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>		2.54	0.81	
<i>Elagatis bipinnulata</i>		0.79	0.12	
<i>Lobotes surinamensis</i>		<0.01	<0.01	
<i>Sectator ocyurus</i>		<0.01	<0.01	
<i>Seriola lalandi</i>		<0.01	0.00	
<i>Seriola rivoliana</i>		<0.01	0.00	
<i>Sphyrna barracuda</i>		0.08	0.05	
<i>Uraspis helvola</i>		<0.01	0.00	
<i>Others, NEI</i>	0.01	0.01		

Table 3. Purse seine bycatch in metric tonnes in the WCPFC-CA and in the WCPFC-CA east of meridian 150°W during 2018. These figures have been estimated from the bycatch records of the trips carrying observers of the AIDCP (c. 82% of the total catch in weight in the WCPFC-CA).



	Species	WCPFC	East of 150 ° W
BILLFISH	<i>Istiompax indica</i>	0.47	0.00
	<i>Makaira nigricans</i>	3.97	0.19
	<i>Makaira, Tetrapturus,</i> <i>Istiompax</i>	0.53	0.11
	<i>Tetrapturus angustirostris</i>	0.02	0.00
	<i>Xiphias gladius</i>	<0.01	0.00
	SHARKS & RAYS	<i>Carcharhinus falciformis</i>	42.12
<i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i>		0.12	0.04
<i>Carcharhinus spp.</i>		0.03	0.00
<i>Mobula spp.</i>		0.03	0.00
<i>Mobulidae</i>		0.19	0.00
<i>Sphyrna lewini</i>		0.07	0.00
OTHER FISH	<i>Ablennes hians</i>	<0.01	0.00
	<i>Acanthocybium solandri</i>	2.28	0.09
	<i>Aluterus monoceros</i>	<0.01	0.00
	<i>Aluterus scriptus</i>	0.05	0.05
	<i>Balistidae</i>	<0.01	<0.01
	<i>Canthidermis maculatus</i>	2.88	0.92
	<i>Caranx sexfasciatus</i>	<0.01	0.00
	<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>	4.06	0.28
	<i>Decapterus macarellus</i>	0.06	0.00
	<i>Elagatis bipinnulata</i>	1.46	0.06
	<i>Kyphosus analogus</i>	0.01	0.00
	<i>Kyphosus elegans</i>	<0.01	0.00
	<i>Kyphosus spp.</i>	<0.01	0.00
	<i>Lobotes surinamensis</i>	<0.01	0.00
	<i>Naucrates ductor</i>	<0.01	0.00
	<i>Remora remora</i>	<0.01	0.00
	<i>Sectator ocyurus</i>	0.04	0.00
	<i>Seriola rivoliana</i>	<0.01	0.00
	<i>Seriola, Caranx spp.</i>	0.02	0.00
	<i>Sphyraena barracuda</i>	0.09	<0.01
<i>Uraspis helvola</i>	<0.01	0.00	
<i>Others, NEI</i>	<0.01	0.00	

Table 4. Purse seine bycatch in metric tonnes in the WCPFC-CA and in the WCPFC-CA east of meridian 150°W during 2017. These figures have been estimated from the bycatch records of the trips carrying observers of the AIDCP (100% of the total catch in weight in the WCPFC-CA).



2. LONG LINE FISHERY

The Spanish long line fleet is composed by 3 long liners. The activity of the fleet commenced in 2004, and it has been targeting swordfish since then. The data hereby included have been obtained from mandatory electronic logbooks for 2018 activity. All Spanish flagged longliners process the swordfish on board in dressed weight (eliminating the head, viscera and fins) and keep it frozen.

2.1. Annual catch and effort by primary species and gear in the WCPFC Convention Area

FAO fishing area	VESSEL	SWO
81	CARMEN TERE	439.816,8
	ILLA GAVEIRA	394.625,4
	PLAYA ZAHARA	289.370,9
Total general (Kg)		1.123.813,1

Table 5. Total estimated catches by species in the Pacific Ocean South of the Equator (Kg)

It has to be noted that the catches included the total amount as result of the activity of these vessels in the WCPFC area, overlapping area and IATTC area, since these vessels may operate in the IATTC area.

2.2. Number of vessels by gear and size (fleet characteristic)

Gear	LONGLINE
Fleet	SPAIN (EU)
Size class (GRT)	
0-50	0
50-200	0
201-500	3
500+	0

VESSEL NAME	AUTHORIZATION PERIOD
CARMEN TERE	01/01 to 31/12/2018
ILLA GAVEIRA	01/01 to 31/12/2018
PLAYA ZAHARA	01/01 to 31/12/2018



2.3. Fishing patterns

Spanish longline vessels in the Western and Central Pacific operate in the temperate area south of 20° south and the mostly work around of 30° south. The port of Auckland (New Zealand) is the main hub for landings and supply activities. Long distances toward south are usually covered before starting fishing activities.

The vessels carry on lengthy trips lasting for 2 to 3 months. The target species is swordfish. They do not catch tropical sensitive shark species such as oceanic whitetip shark, silky shark or whale shark. They displayed an average of 1.177 hooks per vessel in 2018.

2.4. Estimated total catches of non-target, associated and dependent species

It has to be noted that the catches in the following table include the total amount as result of the activity of these vessels in the WCPFC area, overlapping area and IATTC area, since these vessels may operate in the IATTC area.



FAO fishing area	VESSEL	ALB	BET	BLM	MLS	YFT	BUM	SKJ	PBF	LMA	BSH	SMA
81	CARMEN TERE	1.316,8	20.295,36	19.672,9	-	8.221,75	-	-	-	6.576,8	665.649,9	198.852,4
	ILLA GAVEIRA	0.198,0	3.523,19	2.241,23	7.445,6	1.094,14	-	-	-	-	298.849,2	110.197,5
	PLAYA ZAHARA	0.701,6	15.331,62	13.238,23	-	4.148,1	-	-	-	3.067,2	928.631,8	159.974,6
Total general (Kg)		2.216,4	39.150,17	35.152,36	7.445,6	13.463,99	0	-	-	9.644,0	1.893.130,8	469.024,5

Table 6. Total estimated catches by species in the Pacific Ocean South of the Equator (Kg).