

# **FISH AGGREGATING DEVICE MANAGEMENT PLAN (FAD-MP)**

**FOR NEW ZEALAND FLAGGED PURSE SEINE VESSELS OPERATING ON THE HIGH SEAS OF THE  
WESTERN AND CENTRAL PACIFIC CONVENTION AREA BETWEEN THE LATITUDES OF 20°  
NORTH AND 20° SOUTH**

Developed to meet obligations in respect of fish aggregating device (FAD) fishing prescribed in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Conservation and Management Measures 2008-01 and 2009-02

# Scope of the plan

This FAD-MP relates to the high seas deployment of, and fishing on, drifting FADs owned, manufactured, and serviced by New Zealand flagged purse seine vessels operating in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention Area between the latitudes of 20° north and 20° south.

New Zealand fisheries legislation prohibits New Zealand flagged and registered vessels from operating in areas of national jurisdiction unless the operator of the vessel holds an authorisation from the state concerned. The management of FAD use within areas of national jurisdiction is a matter for individual states and is outside of the scope of this plan.

## Management objectives

- To provide for more efficient harvesting of the skipjack resources of the Western and Central Pacific Ocean within environmental limits.
- To minimise the capture of bycatch species including, in particular, juvenile bigeye and yellowfin tuna.
- To improve the accuracy of catch and effort data in support of the management of tuna resources of the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

# Key actions

- To explore and promote to the extent possible innovative, environmentally safe and cost effective FAD designs to achieve the objectives of this plan.
- To constrain, monitor, and track FAD use to meet the objectives of this plan.

## The New Zealand flagged purse seine fleet

New Zealand companies operate four vessels in the equatorial waters of the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

Name	Call sign	Registered Length, m	Tonnage (rounded)
Ocean Breeze	ZMOB	56	1400
San Nikunau	ZMNK	75	2000
San Nanumea	ZMSN	74	1700
Capt MJ Souza	ZMAS	67	1500

# Definition of FAD

For the purpose of the FAD Management Plan (except for the section on FA setting rules) and, as outlined in Conservation and Management Measure 2008-01, a Fish Aggregating Device means any man-made device, or natural floating object, whether anchored or not, that is capable of aggregating fish<sup>3</sup>.

## Limit on FAD numbers per vessel

No vessel identified in the table above will set and/or service more than **200** of its own FADs at any one time.

## FAD identification

Each FAD set and / or serviced is to be uniquely identified and linked to a vessel responsible for its deployment and servicing. Companies shall permanently and appropriately mark each FAD it sets and / or services with:

- the name of the parent purse seine fishing vessel,

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<sup>3</sup> Notwithstanding this definition no sets are to be made on live whales by New Zealand ships – as required by the Marine Mammals Protection Act

- a unique ID number for that FAD including the first two letters of the name of the parent purse seine vessel preceding the number.

## **FAD Ownership**

FADs set and / or serviced by New Zealand flagged vessels and labelled as above are considered the property of the Companies deploying them. These Companies are similarly accountable for their FAD use and management.

## **FAD register**

The vessel master of each vessel shall maintain a register<sup>4</sup> recording key aspects of design and construction of its own FADs. The structure and characteristics of FADs is open to determination by the operator of each vessel but descriptions shall be recorded as outlined in the template provided as Annex one.

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<sup>4</sup> The characteristics of FADs deployed at the time of development of this FAD-MP are not a matter of record. Full characterisation of these deployed FADs will occur over time.

# **FAD Modification**

If monitoring identifies a FAD design or manner of construction that leads to a reduced bycatch of bigeye and yellowfin juvenile tuna then each vessel is to adopt a programme of FAD modification to duplicate this design.

## **FAD Loss and replacement**

Where a FAD belonging to a New Zealand flagged vessel is lost or damaged the vessel has the responsibility to take all reasonable steps to recover the FAD. Other vessels may assist in this regard. Lost FADs may be replaced but total FADs deployed must stay within the vessel limit specified.

Newly manufactured FADs will be of a design intended to reduce the attraction of yellowfin and bigeye juveniles. Particular attention will be taken to the depth of material suspended below the FAD when developing new designs.

## **Definition of FAD set**

A set on a FAD is a set with a purse seine net made by a fishing vessel that is a distance of one nautical mile or less from a FAD at the moment in which the skiff is released into the water for the purposes of that set.

# FAD Setting rules

No purse seine vessel may be used to fish for highly migratory species on any fish aggregation device<sup>5</sup> (FAD) between 0000 hours on 1 July and 2400 hours on 30 September in any one year.

For the purpose of the FAD closure, the definition of a FAD shall be interpreted as including:

*“any object or group of objects, of any size, that has or has not been deployed that is living or non-living, including but not limited to buoys, floats, netting, webbing, plastics, bamboo, logs and whale sharks floating on or near the surface of the water that fish may associate with”*

During the FAD closure period specified above, no purse seine vessel shall conduct any part of a set within one nautical mile of a FAD. That is, at no time may the vessel or any of its fishing gear or tenders be located within one nautical mile of a FAD while a set is being conducted

The operator of a vessel shall not allow the vessel to be used to aggregate fish, or to move aggregated fish including using underwater lights and chumming.

A FAD and/or associated electronic equipment shall not be retrieved by a vessel during the period of a FAD closure unless:

- the FAD and/or associated electronic equipment are retrieved and kept on board the vessel until landed or until the end of the closure; and
- the vessel does not conduct any set either for a period of seven (7) days after retrieval or within a fifty (50) mile radius of the point of retrieval of any FAD.

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<sup>5</sup>For the purposes of the FAD closure, the term Fish Aggregation Device (FAD) means any man-made device, or natural floating object, whether anchored or not, that is capable of aggregating fish and includes any object or group of objects, of any size, that has or has not been deployed, that is living or non-living, including but not limited to buoys, floats, netting, webbing, plastics, bamboo, logs and whale sharks floating on or near the surface of the water that fish may associate with

Fishing vessels shall not be used to operate in cooperation with each other in order to catch aggregated fish. No vessel shall conduct any set during the prohibition period within one nautical mile of a point where a FAD has been retrieved by another vessel within twenty four (24) hours immediately preceding the set.

No FAD set is to be deployed in an area which is closed to purse seine fishing. No FAD is to be deliberately deployed in a manner that will result in the FAD drifting into an area closed to fishing to that vessel

Vessel operators must ensure the vessel has an authorised observer from the WCPFC regional observer program on board at all times while fishing; and

## **FAD log sheets**

Each vessel will keep a record of when each of its own FADs is set to allow comparison of catches and catch composition between FADs of different design. The vessel master of each vessel shall record the information as outlined in the template provided as Annex two.

## **Monitoring the provisions of the FAD Management Plan**

It is intended to monitor the application of this FAD-MP by:

- Companies shall keep a register of deployed FADs in order to manage the number of deployed FADs and to monitor the location of FADs. The Ministry of Fisheries will be furnished a copy of both the register and FAD log sheets on a quarterly basis but shall keep the details held on the register confidential. The Ministry of Fisheries shall have full use of the information on the register for research and reporting purposes, but shall only release such information in line with its guidelines on the release of commercially





Origin	Activity	How detected
1 This vessel this trip	1 Setting on FAD	1 Seen from vessel by crew
2 This vessel prior trip(s)	2 Deploying FAD	2 Helicopter report
	3 Servicing FAD	3 Found using vessel radio buoy
	4 Retrieving FAD	4 Bird radar
	5 Vessel drifting beside FAD	5 Sonar / depth sounder
	6 Vessel setting close to FAD	6 Info from other vessel
	7 Lights used to attract fish from FAD	8 Marked with GPS
	8 Other (describe)	9 Navigation radar
		10 Lights
		11 Birds sighted from vessel
		12 Discovered in purse seine net