

PACIFIC TUNA TAGGING PROGRAMME



MONTHLY TAGGING SUMMARY – APRIL 2008



The new tagging platform “Soltai 105” getting ready in Noro base...

PROGRAMME UPDATE

As announced in the previous tagging summary, Phase 2 activities of the Pacific Tuna Tagging Programme (PTTP) requires a vessel with larger operational range and an agreement was reached with SFPL management to charter one of their newer vessels, the *Soltai 105*, for a 2 week period to ascertain its suitability.

“...over 100, 000 tunas tagged and released...”

The trial took place between 26th March and 07th April 2008, during which 12, 944 tunas were tagged and released. This brings about a significant milestone in the PTTP, with over 100, 000 tunas tagged and released during Phase 1.

Agreements are now in place to receive a major funding commitment from New Zealand (NZD 5 million) for the PTTP. This along with previous funding from Phase 1 donors and other sources will see the PTTP extend into the wider WCPFC region in mid-2008.

TAG RELEASES

The total number of tunas tagged and released during Phase 1 of the PTTP as at April 2008, is 102, 913. **Table 1** shows the total number of tag releases, inclusive of multiple tags implanted in one fish. This total is inclusive of 6 months of fieldwork in Papua New Guinea, 2 months in the Solomon Islands and 2 weeks of trial operations onboard the *Soltai 105*. **Figure 1** shows repartition of the tag releases by species.

Table 1. The total number of tags released during PTTP Phase 1.

	Skipjack	Yellowfin	Bigeye	Total
Conventional tag only	62984	38238	1178	102400
Archival + conventional tag	2	241	48	291
Sonic + conventional tag	69	116	10	195
Archival + sonic + conventional tag	0	19	8	27
Total	63055	38614	1244	102913

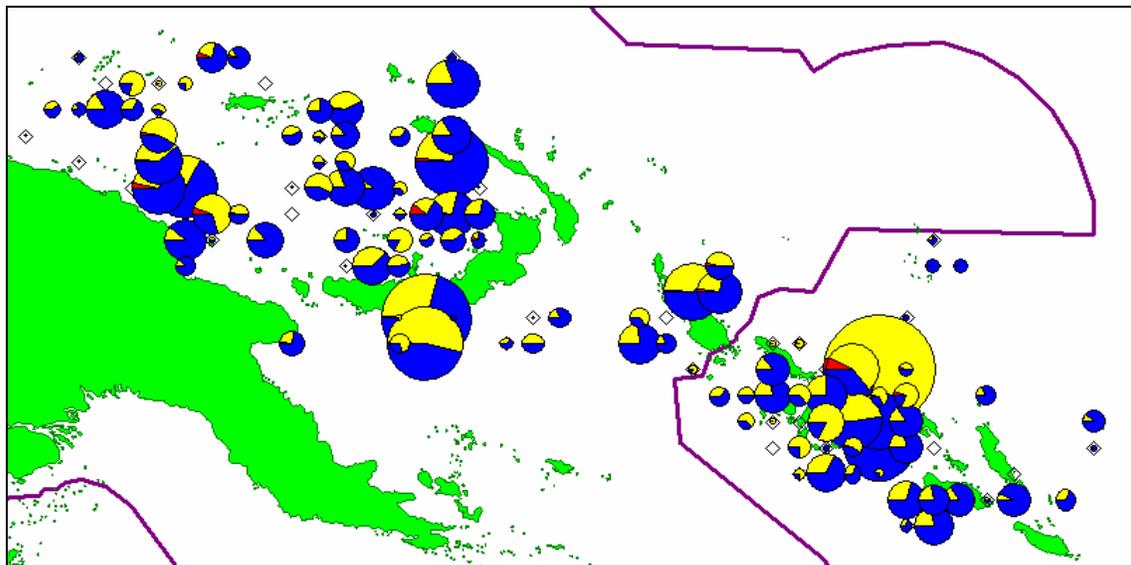


Figure 1. Tag release pie charts indicating proportion of tag releases by species in an area. (Bigeye in red, skipjack in blue and yellowfin in yellow)

TAG RECOVERIES

Tag recoveries are coming in at a flux due to the high number of recent releases in the Solomon Islands. 656 conventional tags and one archival were recovered during April 2008 (Figure 2). This brings the total number of tag returns to **10500**, with an overall recovery rate of **10.2%** (Table 2) for conventional tags, 12.6% for archival tags (Table 3) and 9.9% for sonic tags (Table 4).

Table 2. Conventional tag recoveries for PNG and Solomons releases, as at 30 April 2008, .

	Skipjack	Yellowfin	Bigeye	Total
April 2008 recoveries	300	343	13	656
Total to 30 April 2008	6427 (10.2%)	3828 (9.9%)	244 (19.6%)	10499 (10.2%)

Note : numbers include returns that were double tagged with conventional and electronic tags.

Table 3. Archival tag recoveries, as at 30 April 2008.

	Skipjack	Yellowfin	Bigeye	Total
April 2008 recoveries	-	1	-	0
Total to 30 April 2008	1 (50%)	28 (10.8%)	11 (19.6%)	40 (12.6%)

Table 4. Sonic tag recoveries, as at 30 April 2008.

	Skipjack	Yellowfin	Bigeye	Total
April 2008 recoveries	0	0	0	0
Total to 30 April 2008	3 (4.3%)	12 (8.9%)	7 (38.9%)	22 (9.9%)

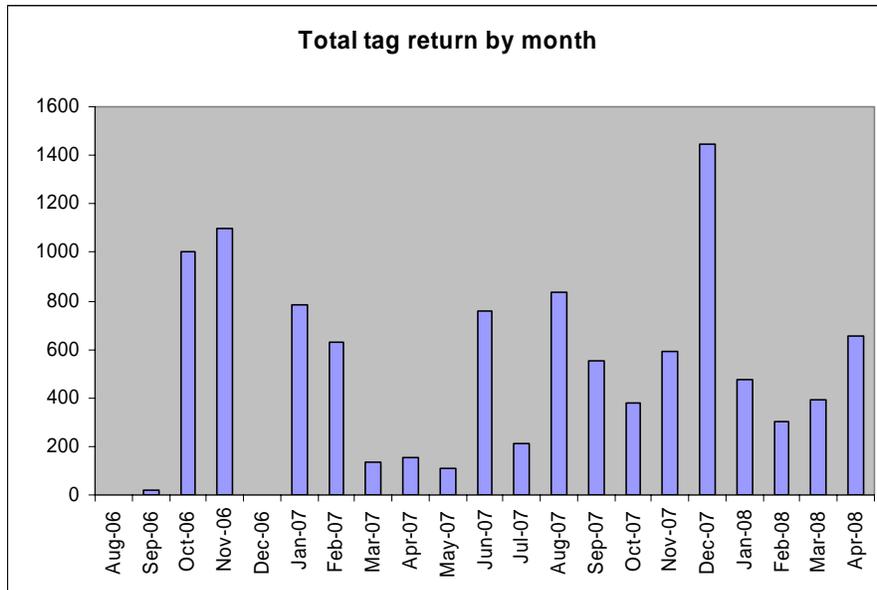


Figure 2. Number of tag returns by month.

The April 2008 recoveries were dominated by returns from the Solomon Islands purse-seiners - NFD and Global Investment (Table 5).

Table 5. Number of tag recoveries by source (location found).

Tag return source	April 2008 returns	Total returns
American Samoa	0	13
China	0	1
FSM	0	1
IATTC	0	135
Indonesia	0	75
IOTC	3	5
Japan	0	271
Korea	5	130
Philippines (direct)	36	360
Philippines (Frabelle)	0	162
PNG (Frabelle)	55	645
PNG (NFA)	0	89
PNG (RD)	0	5022
PNG (SSTC)	0	145
PNG (other)	2	33
Solomon Islands (NMFMR)	24	24
Solomon Islands (Soltai)	36	165
Solomon Islands (Global Investment)	152	944
Solomon Islands (NFD)	314	1492
Solomon Islands (Other)	24	51
Tagging vessel	0	23
Thailand	6	707
Other	0	7
TOTAL	657	10500

Table 6. Number of tag recoveries by vessel flag.

Flag	April 2008 returns	Total returns
China	0	35
FSM	0	9
Indonesia	0	83
Japan	0	289
Kiribati	0	11
Korea	28	198
Marshall Islands	0	8
New Zealand	0	2
Panama	0	8
PNG	10	5533
Philippines	73	969
Solomon Islands	370	1703
Seychelles	0	1
Taiwan	10	287
United States	3	9
Vanuatu	153	906
Non identified	10	449
TOTAL	657	10500

TAG LOTTERY

The first of a series of tag return lotteries (Figure 3) will take place in Thailand, during the 'TUNA 2008' conference in Bangkok, on 28th May 2008. Winners will be drawn from the records of all the tag returns. The prizes on offer include an mp3 player, mobile phone and a digital camera.

To be in with a chance of winning, simply return any tags you find with the following information:

1. Date of recapture
2. Position of recapture
3. Species
4. Length of tuna

To your nearest fisheries office or to SPC at the below address;

Oceanic Fisheries Programme
Secretariat of the Pacific Community
B.P D5 Noumea Cedex, 98848, New Caledonia.
Phone: (+687) 262000
Web: www.spc.int/tagging



SPC TAG LOTTERY



The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) is conducting a regional tuna tagging project. The collection of tag recovery data is an important component of this project and SPC will be implementing tag recovery procedures to collect and refine this data. As part of the tag recovery procedures, tag lotteries will be conducted in key points for tag recovery.



The names of tag finders from a particular area/country, taken from the tag recovery information provided to SPC, will be pooled together and prizes will be awarded to the lucky people whose names are drawn from the pool.

To be eligible return any tags you have or may find with the following information;

- 1 Species of tuna
- 2 Tag Number
- 3 Date of recapture
- 4 Position of recapture/local area
- 5 Name, address and contact details of the tag finder

to the addresses below;

John Hampton [Local contact address]
Oceanic Fisheries Programme (OFP)
Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)
B.P D5 98848 Noumea Cedex, New Caledonia
Phone: (Int) (+687) 262000
Fax: (Int) (+687) 263818
Email: oceanfish@spc.int
Webpage: www.spc.int/tagging

The aim of the lotteries is to re-publicize the tagging project in order to maintain it in the public consciousness, reinforce the tag recovery procedures, reinforce the tag recovery contacts and as a means to 'flush out' tags that, as yet, have not been returned.

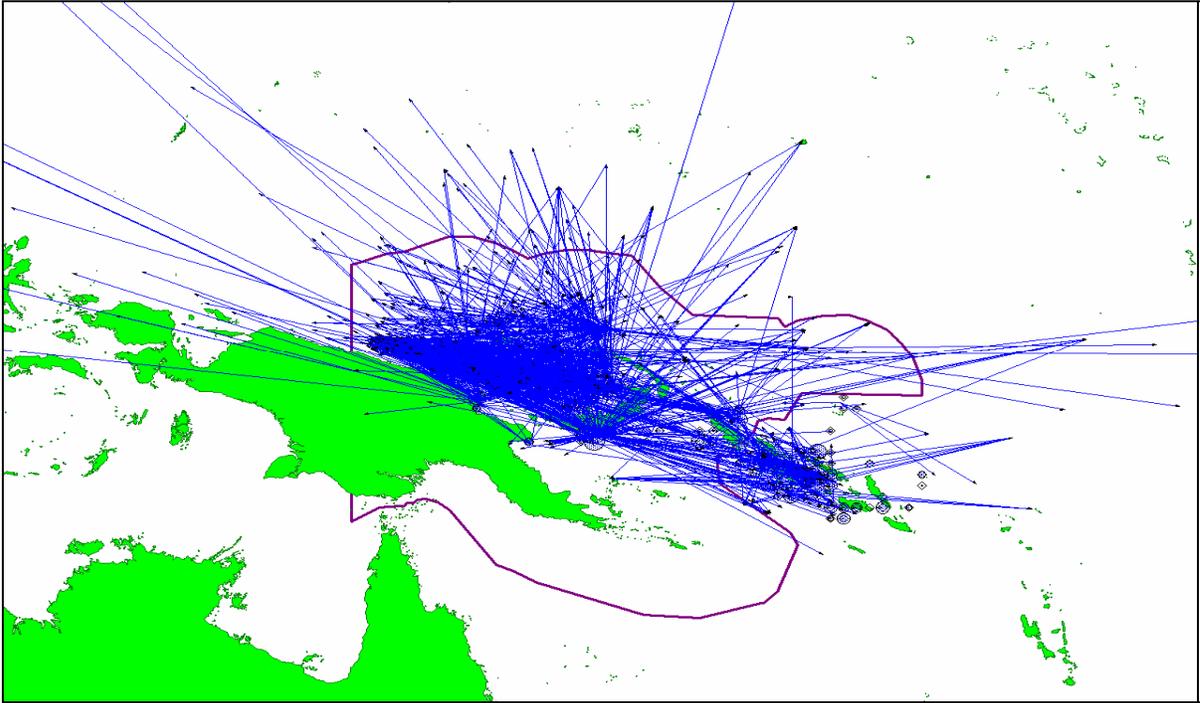
Ideally the lotteries will be held in during major meetings/conferences where there will already be quite significant local media coverage.



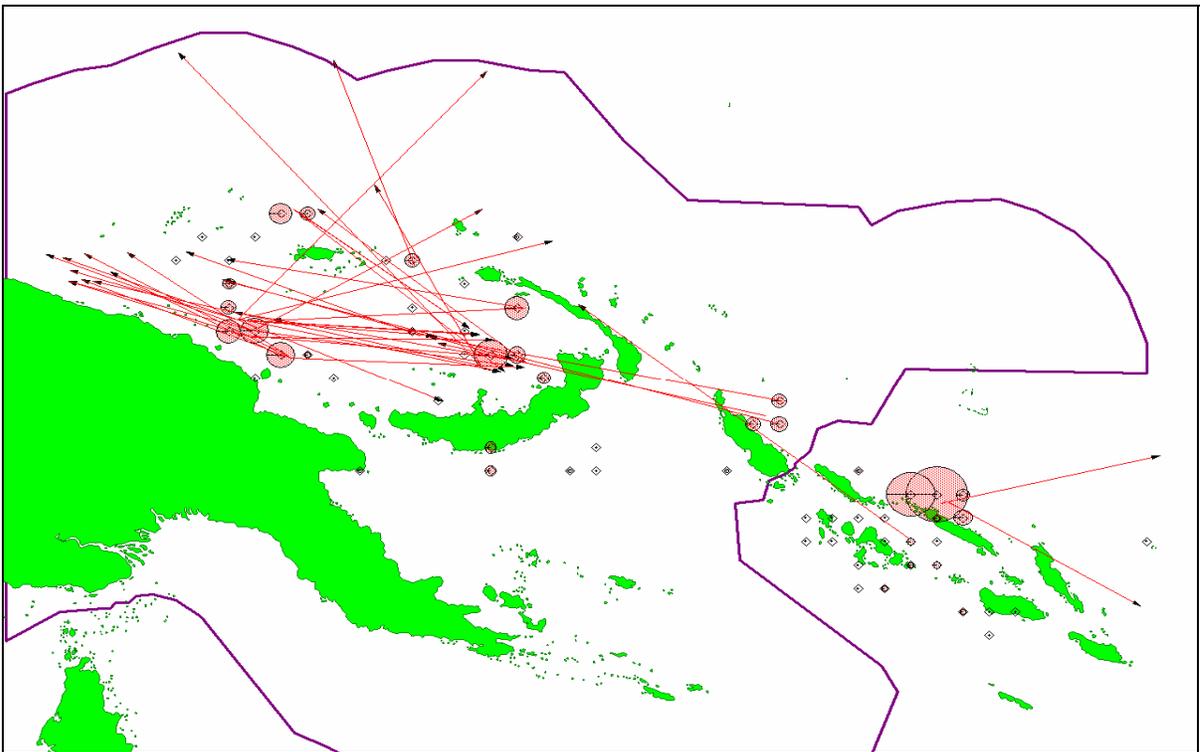
Figure 3. A sample of the tag lottery poster.

TAGGED FISH MOVEMENTS

(a)



(b)



(c)

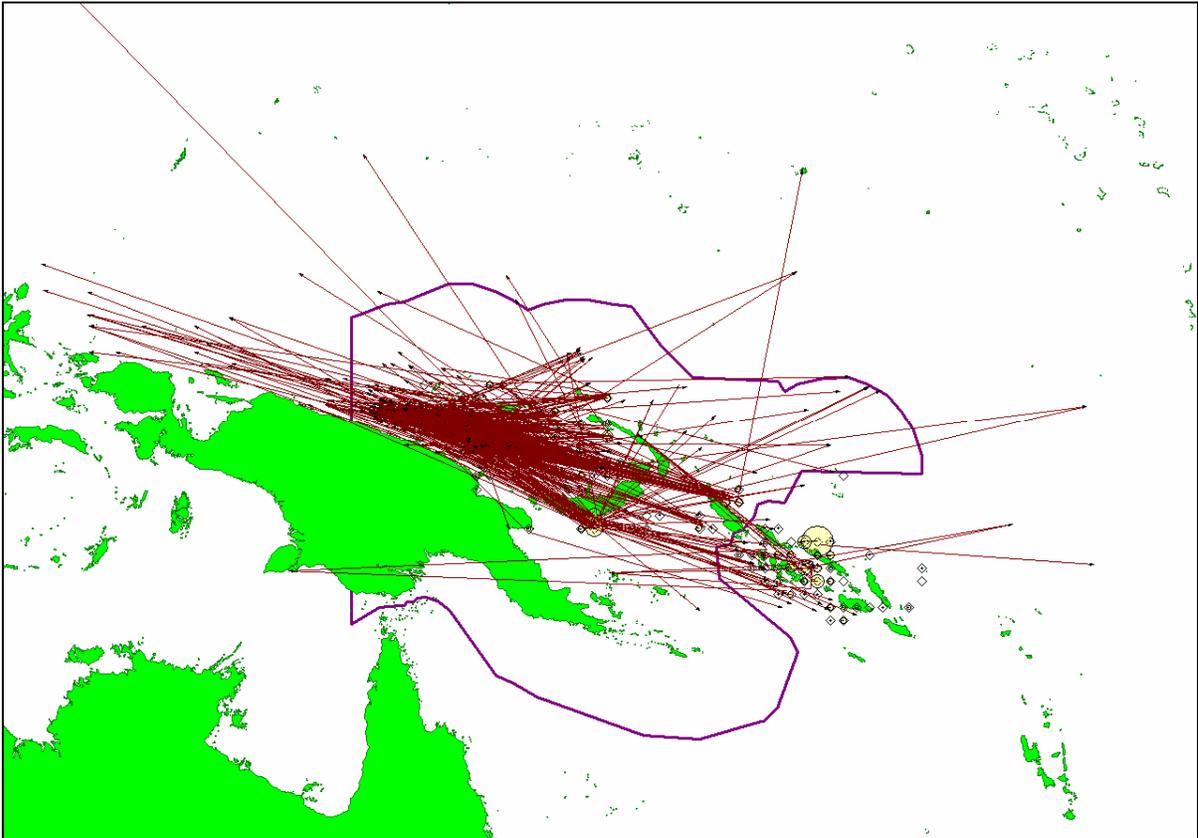


Figure 4. Movement of the tagged tuna population, from release and recovery data, (a) skipjack, (b) Bigeye and (c) yellowfin.

For further information please contact:

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