



PTTP Bi-Monthly Summary

August - September, 2008 Brought to you by SPC - Oceanic Fisheries Programme



Project News

TAGGING IN MICRONESIA AND PHILIPPINES

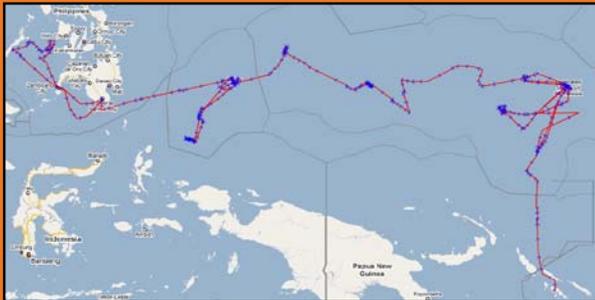


Figure1. Vessel cruise track starting from the Solomon Islands and including Micronesia and Philippines.

The second phase of the Pacific Tuna Tagging Programme (PTTP) extends the successful Phase 1 (PNG and Solomon Islands) into most areas of the equatorial western Pacific Ocean (Lat 10° N 10° S, Long 130° E – 180°). In 2008, Phase 2 activities include a one month Central Pacific cruise (CP-08-01 completed last June along the Line Islands) and a five month cruise (WP1) that will cover the EEZ of FSM, Palau, Philippines, Indonesia and part of PNG waters.

The main tagging platform, FV Soltai 105, commenced tagging operations in June, with Dr. Antony Lewis as cruise leader (and Tagging Programme Coordinator),

Two “cruise legs” have been completed in FSM, the first one was completed on 17 July and covering mainly the Pohnpei area and south of it, down to about 04 N. The second leg covered the western part of the EEZ, ending in Palau on the 14th August, tagging through the states of Chuuk and Yap.

Tagging in Palau commenced in early August. Fishing was spent to the east and west sides of the Palau’s main islands, seamounts to the south and west of Angaur island, south of the EEZ comprising Helen Reef/Tobi Island and the Sonsoral small island group.

Tagging in the Philippines commenced on September 1, and fishing was spent in the Sulu Sea, towards the Basilan Strait, Zamboanaga and the Moro Gulf.

On 25 September the tagging vessel left Philippines for Indonesia waters.

Tag Releases

Total tag releases at 27th September stands at **20, 933** for WP-1. This brings the total number of tag releases for the project to **125, 948**. The current tagging operations will cease on 23rd November, and a further two tagging cruises are planned for next year.

Tag Recoveries

Recaptures from the recent releases are starting to be reported. Total tag recoveries as at 27th September, stands at 497 for **WP1**. This brings the total number of tag recoveries for the whole project to 13517, with a 10.73% recovery rate. Figure 4 shows the displacement of tagged tunas from the area which they were tagged.

The number of tag recoveries by month (**Figure5**) shows large fluctuations in the rate of recovery with the larger amounts of tags being returned a month or so after the commencement of tagging operations.

Table1. Total number of tag releases, recoveries and % recoveries by species as at 27th September

	Releases	Recoveries	%
Skipjack	77,119	8,034	10.41%
Yellowfin	45,362	5,221	11.50%
Bigeye	3,467	369	10.64%
Total	125,948	13,624	10.81%

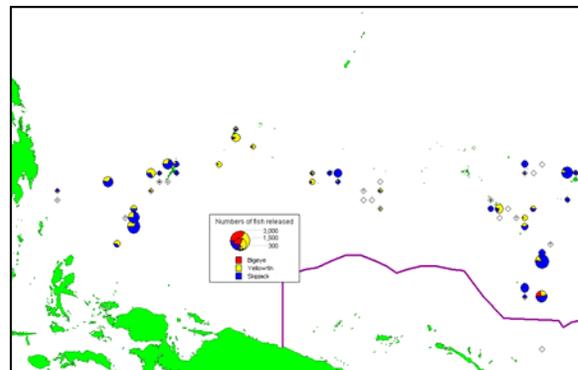
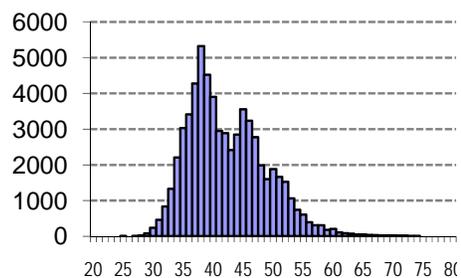
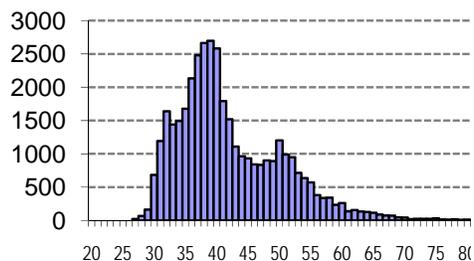


Figure2. Pie charts representing the proportion of tunas tagged in an area by species, during WP1, as at 27th September

(a) Skipjack, n=63181



(b) Yellowfin, n=38471



(c) Bigeye, n=1240

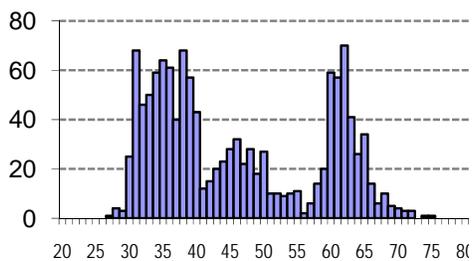
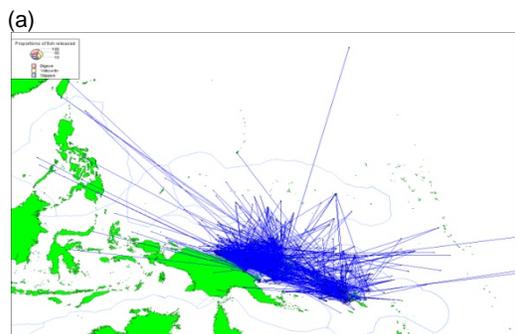
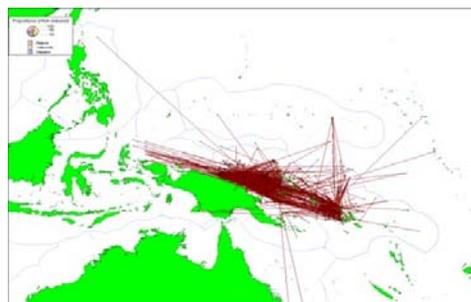


Figure3 length frequency of tagged (a) skipjack, (b) yellowfin, (c) bigeye, during the **PTTP**, as at 27th September



(b)



(c)

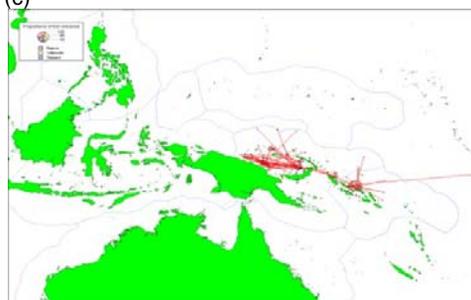


Figure 4(a) Displacement (>100nm) of tagged tuna from PTP releases (a) skipjack (b) yellowfin (c) bigeye

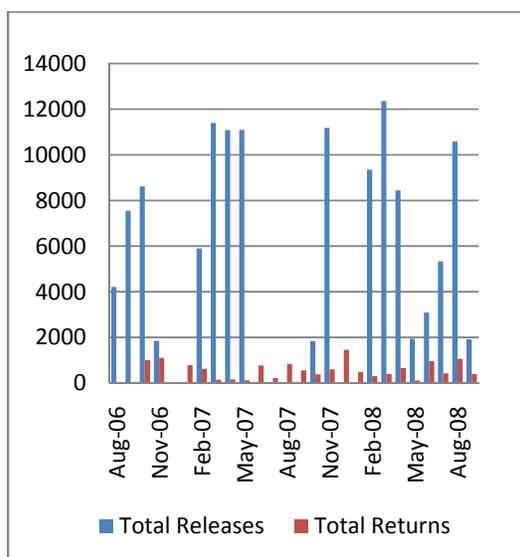


Figure5. Tag releases-returns by month

Table2. Tag recoveries by vessel flag as at 19th September.

Australia	2
China	73
Ecuador	3
Fiji	1
FSM	12
Indonesia	86
Japan	805
Kiribati	15
Korea	390
Marshall Islands	13
New Zealand	4
Panama	10
Papua New Guinea	5740
Philippines	1108
Seychelles	1
Solomon Islands	3275
Spain	58
Taiwan	482
Tonga	3
United States	96
Unknown	485
Vanuatu	1025
Total	13624

Tag Return Lotteries

Tag Return Lotteries were conducted for Papua New Guinea in Madang at the RD fishing wharf at Vidar and at the South Seas Tuna plant in Wewak. Prizes for the Tag Return Lotteries were: 1st – K750.00, 2nd – K500.00 and 3rd – A mobile phone

Winners for Madang were 1st Prize: Teodoro Claua Jnr, 2nd Prize: Mario Purazo, 3rd Prize: Candido Besinga.

Winners for Wewak were 1st Prize: Yange Meric, 2nd Prize: Ezekiel Sapias, 3rd Prize: Mathias Mongoro.

Very special thanks to Morgan Gwangilo, Maireen Sarita (South Seas Tuna) and Sammy Rivera (RD Fishing) for your assistance in conducting the lottery. The tag return lottery for the Solomon Islands is planned to coincide with the return of the tagging vessel to Noro in the Solomon Islands.

(a)



(b)



Figure6. (a) Sammy Rivera drawing winners from RD Fishing tag returns, (b) Morgan Gwangilo drawing names from SST tag returns and being read out by Maireen Sarita.

PROFILES



Dr. Ashley Williams

We take this opportunity to introduce Dr. Ashley Williams, SPC's recently recruited Albacore Biologist.

Ashley joined the Ecosystem Monitoring and Analysis team as a Fisheries Scientist in May 2008 and is responsible for analyzing biological and ecological data leading to enhanced understanding of the population dynamics of South Pacific albacore tuna. Prior to this appointment he was a Senior Research Fellow at the Fishing and Fisheries Research Centre at James Cook University, Townsville, where he led several research projects focused on providing fisheries managers and stakeholders with pertinent information for the assessment and management of fisheries within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and Torres Strait.

Ashley will implement a tagging project for albacore beginning early next year and as such we would like you to be aware of the upcoming project. As well as building a albacore fishery specific network of contacts and tag recovery officers we intend to extend the tag reporting and tag recovery system used in the PTPP, for the albacore tagging project as well.

Regards,

The Tagging Team