



PTTP Bi-Monthly Summary

August - September 2009

Brought to you by SPC - Oceanic Fisheries Programme



Project News

Back to into the waters of Indonesia



The first two weeks of August were spent in Papua New Guinea, tagging in the Bismarck Sea before heading for Indonesia, clearing in at Biak in the Papua Province. Then from mid-August to mid-September tagging was conducted in the Banda, Maluku, Flores and Halmahera Seas of Indonesia, before heading back into Papua New Guinea waters.

At the end of the tagging work in Indonesia an additional 15,006 tunas were tagged and released in the waters of Indonesia.

Tag Releases

Total tag releases as at 30th September 2009, stands at 20,285. This brings the total number of tag releases for the project to 233,841.

Tag Recoveries

Recaptures from the recent releases are starting to be reported. Total tag recoveries for August and September as at 30th September, stands at 1,734. This brings the total number of tag recoveries for the whole project (PTTP) to 26,475 with a 12.48% recovery rate (Table 1). Figure 2 shows tag releases for the entire PTTP, including the releases in the central Pacific. Figure 3 illustrates the size classes tagged over the PTTP for each of the three target species. Figure 4 shows the displacement of tagged tunas from the area which they were tagged.

The number of tag recoveries by month (Figure 5) 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.

Table 1. Total tag releases, recoveries and recovery rate as at 30th September 2009.

	Releases	Recoveries	%
Skipjack	150,579	16,642	11.05%
Yellowfin	73,323	8,632	11.77%
Bigeye	9,939	1,201	12.08%
Total	233,841	26,475	11.32%

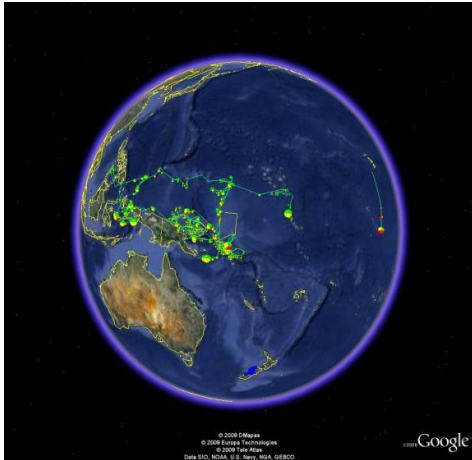
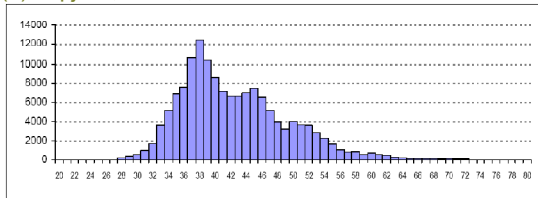
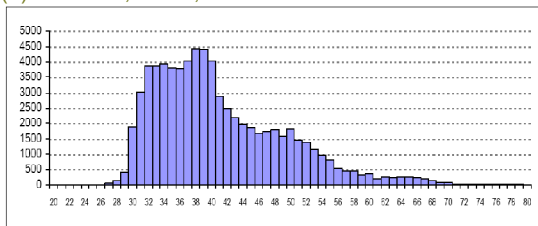


Figure 2. Tag release pie charts for the project including the central Pacific.

(a) Skipjack, n=150,579



(b) Yellowfin, n= 73,323



(c) Bigeye, n=9,939

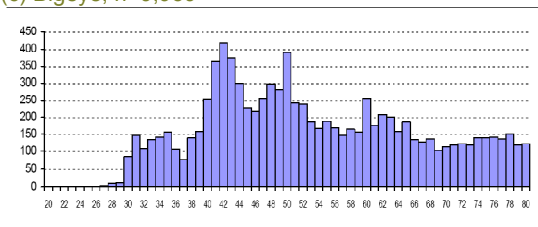
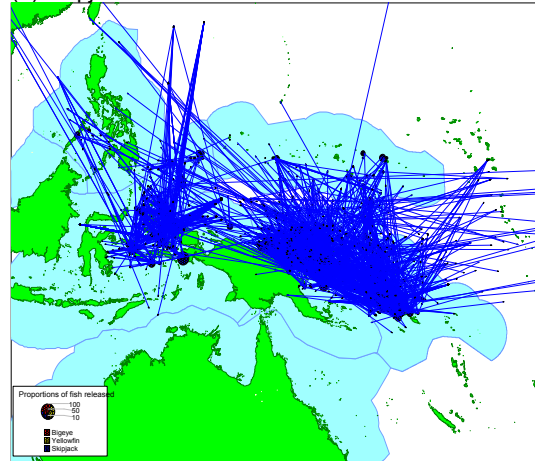
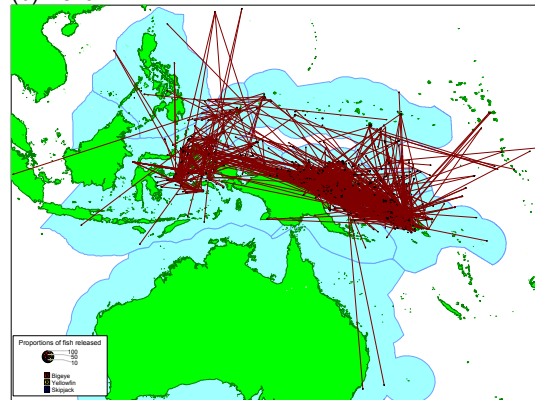


Figure 3. Length frequency distribution of tagged tuna population.

(a) Skipjack



(b) Yellowfin



(c) Bigeye

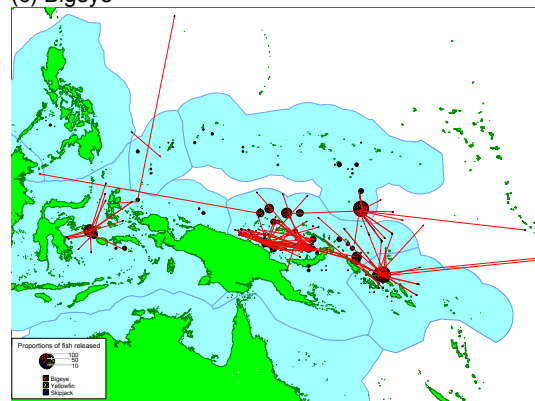


Figure 4 Tag release-recapture arrow map for skipjack, yellowfin and bigeye; >200nm.

TAG RETURNS BY VESSEL FLAG

Table 2. Tag recoveries by vessel flag.

	AUG-SEP 09	Total
Australia	0	2
China	20	244
Ecuador	0	165
El Salvador	0	4
Fiji	0	3
FSM	44	259
Indonesia	129	3869
Japan	172	1532
Kiribati	52	101
Korea	98	710
Marshall Islands	137	195
Nauru	1	1
New Zealand	0	5
Panama	0	18
Papua New Guinea	409	6826
Philippines	84	3092
Seychelles	0	1
Solomon Islands	8	4289
Spain	0	59
Taiwan	140	1362
Tonga	0	0
United States	314	1067
Unknown	59	1130
Vanuatu	51	1358
Total	1,734	26,475

Figure 5 Tag releases and tag returns per month

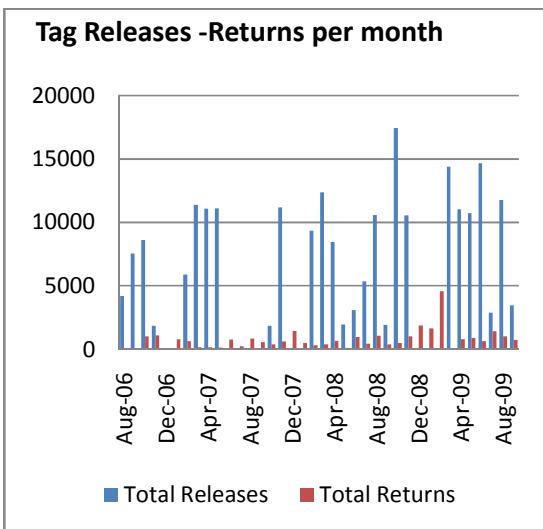


Table 3. Tag returns by tag recovery source

Tag Return Source	AUG-SEP 09	Total
American Samoa	77	116
Carriers	0	0
China	0	1
Fishing Vessel	35	336
FSM	19	29
IATTC	1	910
Indonesia	129	3717
IOTC	0	8
Japan	171	1470
Kiribati	43	94
Korea	69	386
Marshall Islands	204	262
Nauru	1	1
Philippines (Direct)	3	2383
Philippines (Frabelle)	0	163
PNG (Frabelle)	78	1022
PNG (NFA)	0	117
PNG (RD)	263	5382
PNG (SSTC)	56	855
PNG (Other)	0	52
Solomon Islands (NMFMR)	11	162
Solomon Islands (Soltai)	0	803
Solomon Islands (Global Investment)	0	1043
Solomon Islands (NFD)	0	3418
Solomon Islands (Other)	0	30
Taiwan	0	14
Tagging Vessel	0	151
Thailand	567	2926
Other	7	38
Total	1,734	26,475

TAG RETURN LOTTERIES

Tag return lotteries are currently being planned for the Philippines, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Japan. These are being planned to coincide with large meetings and events in order to greater generate publicity and continued awareness of the importance of the tagging program.

PROFILES

In this section we would like to acknowledge the persons who have contributed to the success of the project. We will endeavor to profile an SPC staff member involved in the project as well as one of our tag recovery contacts.

SPC PERSONNEL

John Hampton



John is the Oceanic Fisheries Programme Manager and has been involved in every aspect of the Pacific Tuna Tagging Project. From the planning and development, to the current fieldwork and administration and looking forward to the analyses of the tagging data.

John obtained a BSc (Hons) in Marine Biology from James Cook University in Australia and obtained a PhD in stock assessment for bluefin tuna from the University of New South Wales. Initially employed by the Australian Department of Primary Industry in Canberra, he then joined the CSIRO in before joining SPC as a Senior Fisheries Scientist in 1987., initially focusing on the analysis of tuna tagging data as part of the EU-funded Regional Tuna Tagging Project.

TAG RECOVERY CONTACTS

Derek Samani Suimae



Derek is the Observer Coordinator for the Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources.

Derek handles observer placement longline vessels operating in Solomon Islands as well as for the purse seine vessels fishing in Solomon Islands. Derek currently oversees a growing team of observers and port samplers. Derek's duties include observer placement, performing debriefing and training for observers in data collection.

Derek has assisted in the publicity of the PTTTP in the Solomon Islands as well as assisting with other SPC projects running concurrently. Derek has replaced Mr. Hudoon Wakio as the main tag recovery contact person in the Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources since the departure of Mr. Hudson Wakio the former National Tuna Data Coordinator.

Regards,

The Tagging Team