

The background of the slide is a photograph of a large school of tuna swimming in deep blue water. The fish are silvery with a yellowish-green stripe along their sides. They are swimming in various directions, creating a sense of movement. The lighting is natural, highlighting the sleek bodies of the fish.

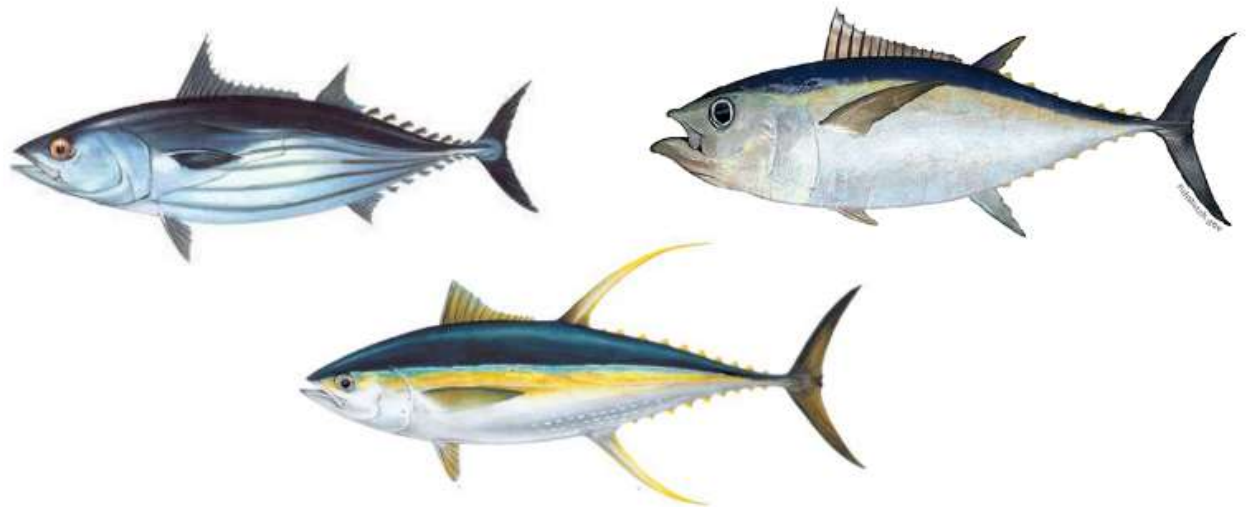
# TALKING TUNA FISHERIES

Bill Holden  
16 February 2022

# SESSION OVERVIEW



- Tuna fisheries in the MSC program
- Challenges for tuna fisheries
- Updates on specific issues
- Opportunities for tuna



# TUNA IN THE PIPELINE



Tuna catches continue to increase globally – tuna is a profitable commodity. And the pressure on tuna stocks is growing and ensuring sustainability is vital.

23% of all fish caught in the MSC program is tuna – 3.0 million out of a total of 13.0 million tonnes (certified and in assessment).

Global tuna commercial catch is 5.78 million tonnes (FAO 2019):

- 34.4% of global catch is MSC certified
- 18.7% of global catch is in full MSC assessment
- 31% of global catch is in a FIP

**So you see, there is so much more in the pipeline...**



# MSC CERTIFIED TUNA GLOBALLY



**28.89%** of global tuna catch is MSC certified\*

**20.40%** of global tuna catch is currently in assessment to the MSC Standard\*\*

**19.54%** of global tuna catch is currently in a FIP (basic or comprehensive)\*\*\*

**31.17%** of global tuna catch is neither MSC certified, in assessment or in a FIP\*\*\*\*

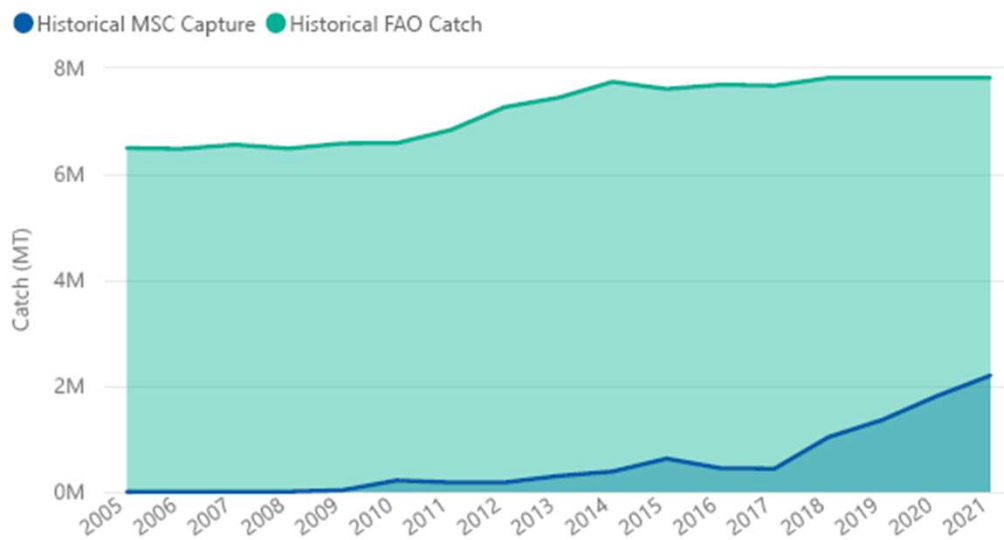
\* 63 certified tuna fisheries \*\* 35 tuna fisheries in assessment \*\*\* Based on all Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) solely targeting tuna listed on Fishery Progress \*\*\*\* Data as of 31 March, 2021



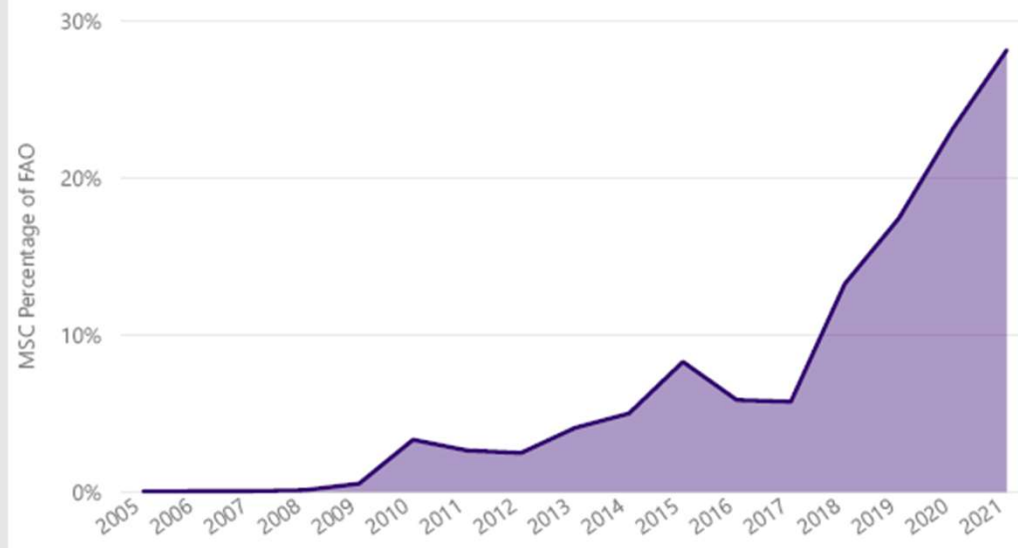
# GROWTH OF MSC CERTIFIED TUNA FISHERIES



Historical MSC marine capture compared to FAO marine capture



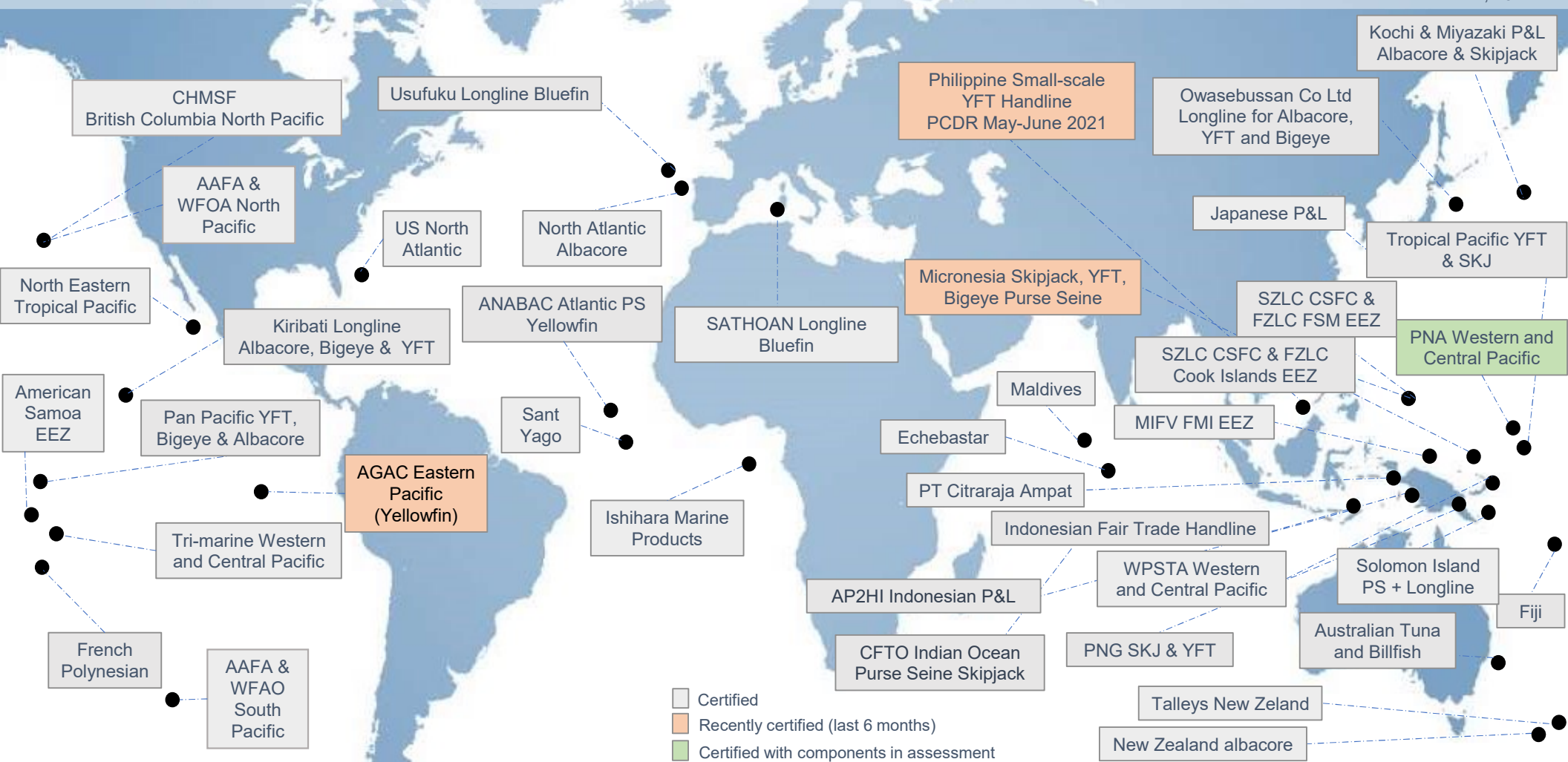
Historical MSC marine capture percentage of FAO marine capture



MSC tuna volume and percentages as a proportion of global tuna landings

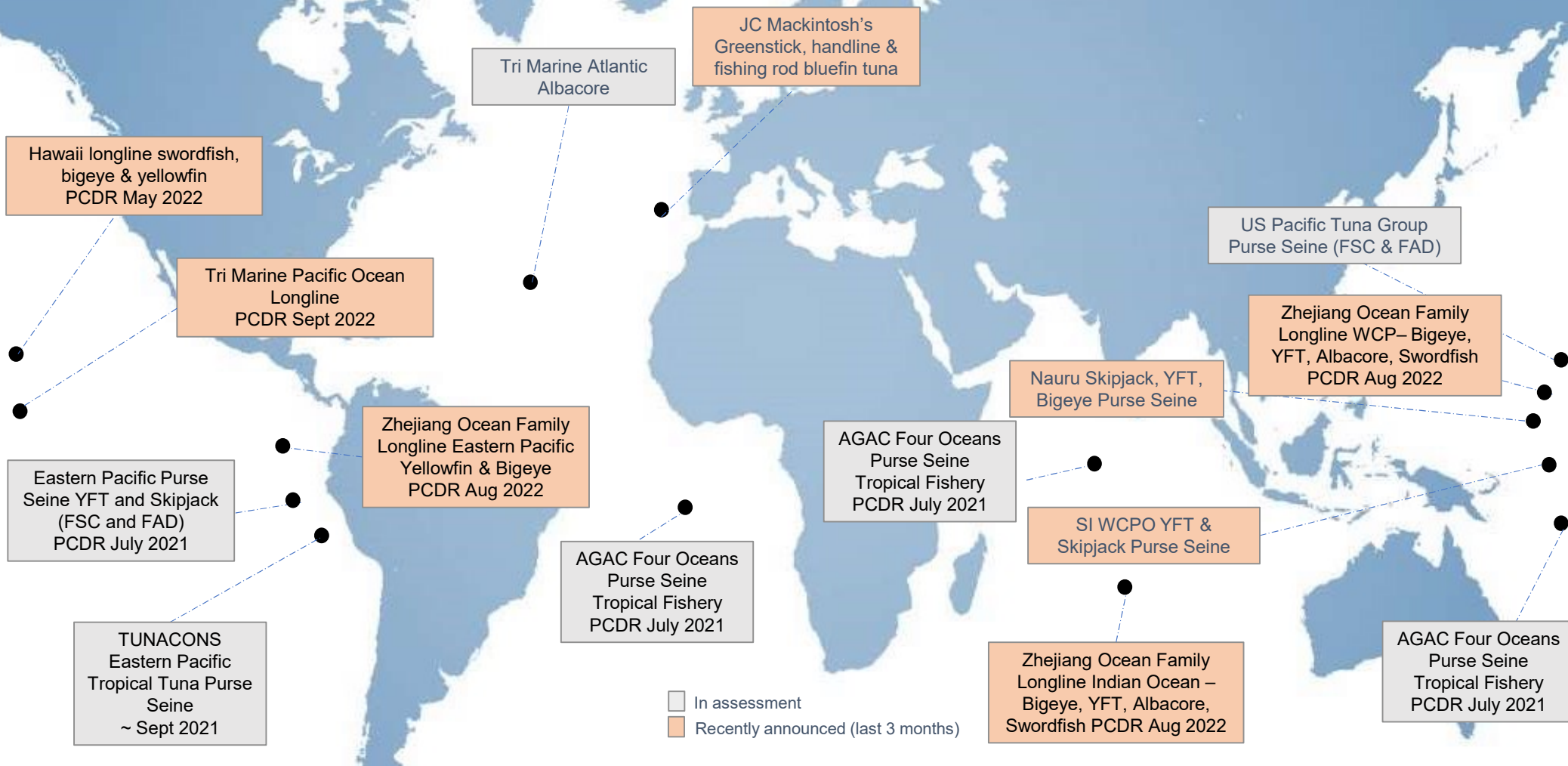
# MSC CERTIFIED TUNA FISHERIES

As of Feb 1, 2022



# MSC TUNA PIPELINE FISHERIES

As of Feb 1, 2022



# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

Since the first tuna fishery became MSC certified in 2007

**49 improvements**

have been made to ensure best practice, including:

22



to minimise their environmental impact

8

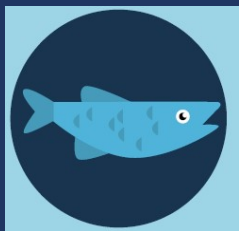


to ensure the sustainability of fish stocks

19



to strengthen fisheries management



6

to minimise bycatch



7

improvements benefitted sharks & rays



4

improvements benefitted sea turtles



14

improvements to fishery management mechanisms



# CHALLENGES FOR MSC TUNA FISHERIES



## Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs)

Certified tuna fisheries have limited abilities to encourage RFMOs into making necessary changes to their management measures (e.g. a lack of Harvest Control Rules in place). This can lead to fisheries being unable to meet conditions.

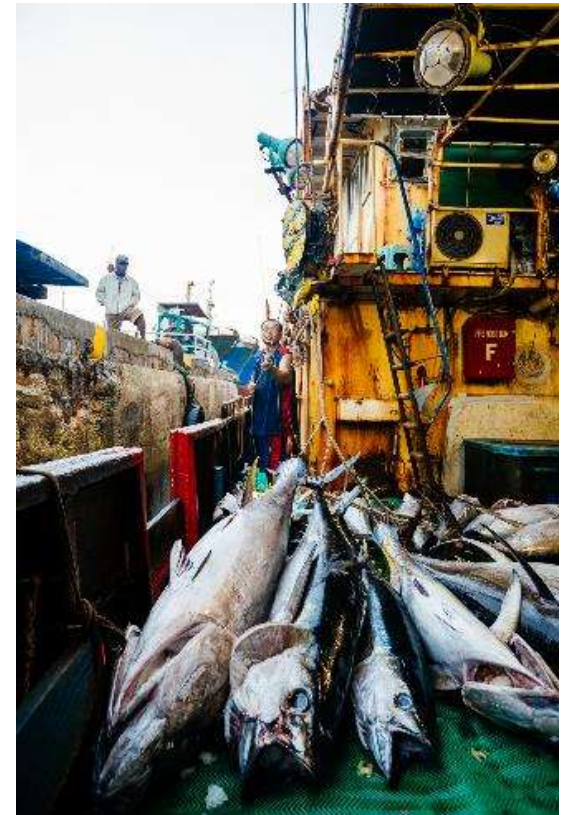
## Need for harmonisation between CABs

Different CAB decisions during MSC assessments can lead to complexities and sometimes unaligned scoring.

## Specific risks in tuna fisheries

These risks relate to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, forced labour, shark finning, FAD and ghost gear requirements and supply chain complexities.

***+Temporary: Covid-19 restrictions to observer programs***



# MSC STATEMENT JULY 2021



The Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) needs to continue good progress in 2021 so that it can complete its HS/HCR workplans by December 2022

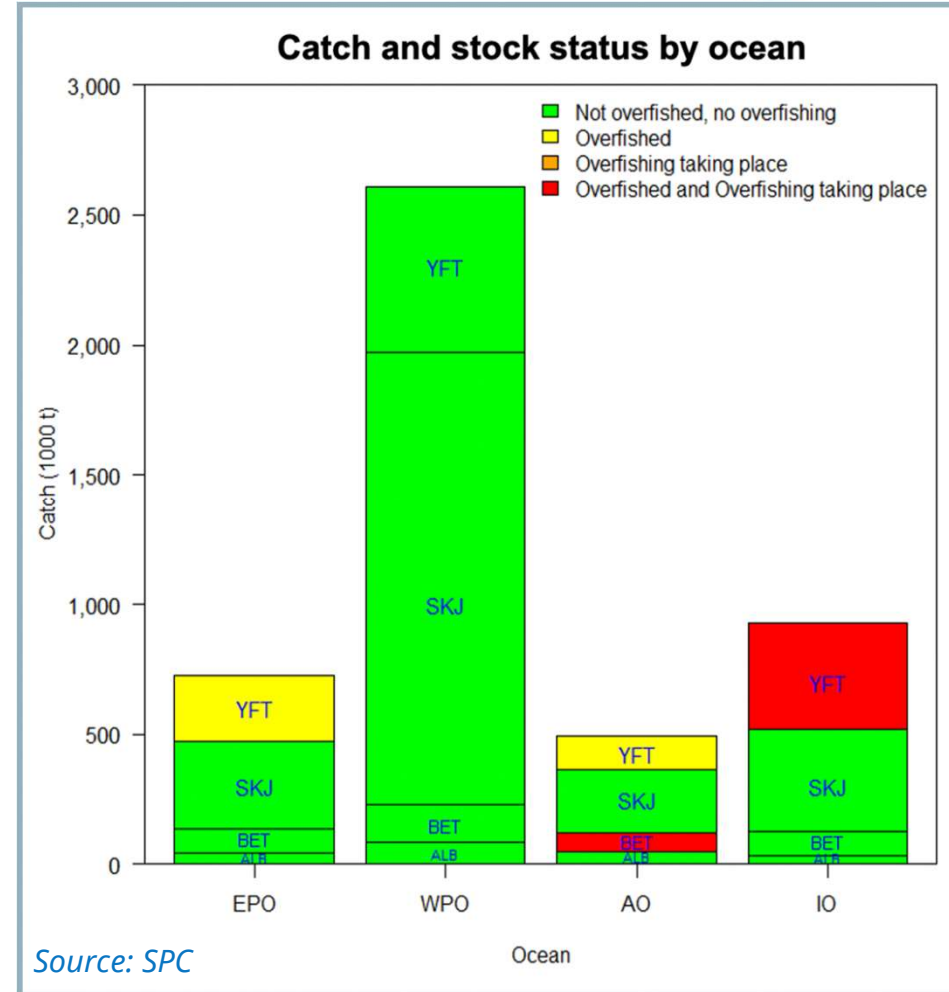
- MSC statement highlights the topic and supports fisheries' effort to complete the task.
- MSC is asking all fishery, retail partners and tuna focused NGOs to engage on the topic, including direct communication with national delegations.

**Progress in critical Western Central Pacific tuna fisheries talks needed to ensure sustainable fishing**



# THE BIG PICTURE

- Fish stocks are inherently variable, HS/HCR “safety net” is key in the Standard, even for healthy WCPO tuna stocks
- WCPO skipjack is a key fishery – large, highly traded and globally important. Leaders need to lead on this global tuna issue
- With a loss of certification, important conditions on bycatch, FAD improvements, etc., will also be lost
- The high transparency of MSC audits will not be available



# HARVEST STRATEGIES FOR TUNA



- Western Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) represents 79% of MSC's tuna in our program certified.
- At least a quarter of labelled skipjack tuna sales are known to come from Western Central Pacific Ocean.

## The issue:

All MSC certified fisheries in WCPO have conditions to improve Harvest Strategies and Harvest Control Rules

Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) management system not yet able to deliver the best practice level. Scheduled for December 2022

Independent CABs harmonized these conditions -- all fisheries face the same condition.

CABs will review in June 2023 unless WCPFC acts





# OTHER TUNA RFMO HARVEST STRATEGY TIMELINES



- IATTC: yellowfin does not have HS conditions so no impact. N Pacific albacore condition end date as per the CAB harmonized condition is May 2025. No other species are certified at present (skipjack and bigeye failed in recent assessments)
- IOTC: skipjack did not have HS condition at the time of the CAB Megvar decision but has a new condition since 2020 that needs to be closed out by May 2026. No other species certified at present.
- ICCAT: N Atlantic albacore had an HCR adopted through Rec 17-04. Bigeye is failing a current assessment. Yellowfin and E Atlantic skipjack have an HS condition end date of March 2026. Although skipjack has since been suspended.

# FUTURE CHALLENGES

## TUNA STOCKS WITH HCRs AND STOCKS WHERE MSC CERTIFIED FISHERIES HAVE COMMITTED TO DELIVERING HCRs

Species	Indian Ocean (IOTC) <sup>i</sup>	Atlantic Ocean (ICCAT) <sup>ii</sup>	Western-Central Pacific (WCPFC) <sup>iii</sup>	Eastern Pacific (IATTC) <sup>iv</sup>
Skipjack	HCR in place	2022	2022	Managed by the HCR of YFT and BET
Yellowfin		2022		HCR in place
Bigeye				HCR in place
Albacore		HCR in place	2022 (South Pacific stock) 2023 (North Pacific stock)	2023
Bluefin		2024		

Empty cells are those stocks where there is no HCR.

# FUTURE CHALLENGES

## More than just harvest strategies and control rules

- FAD coverage and ghost fishing
- Adapting to covid – observer coverage
- ETP and bycatch
- Shark finning
- Social and labour issues





# GHOST GEAR REQUIREMENTS



- A new requirement to the Principle 2 components for Endangered, Threatened and Protected species (ETP) and Habitats which will direct fisheries to implement management strategies focused on minimising gear loss (including lost or discarded Fish Aggregation Devices) and ghost gear impact.
- Fisheries would need to account for any FADs that are lost and be able to demonstrate they are avoiding and managing this loss, for example, by tracking or retrieving them, or showing they are low impact by being non entangling and biodegradable. We expect these new requirements to result in significant changes in FAD fishing practices by many MSC certified fisheries.





# CHALLENGES DUE TO COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS



In some parts of the world management agencies have suspended or restricted their observer programs in order to protect both crew and observers – many have restarted, but there are gaps in observer data.

E.g. WCPFC decisions to extend suspension of purse seine observer coverage, at-sea transshipment for purse seine vessels, and at-sea transshipment observers until 15 March 2022 due to COVID-19.

All fisheries and supply chain partners should consider alternative measures to verify sustainability and traceability of seafood where existing practices are deemed impractical or temporarily unavailable and verify with their CABs.



# ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF SHARK FINNING

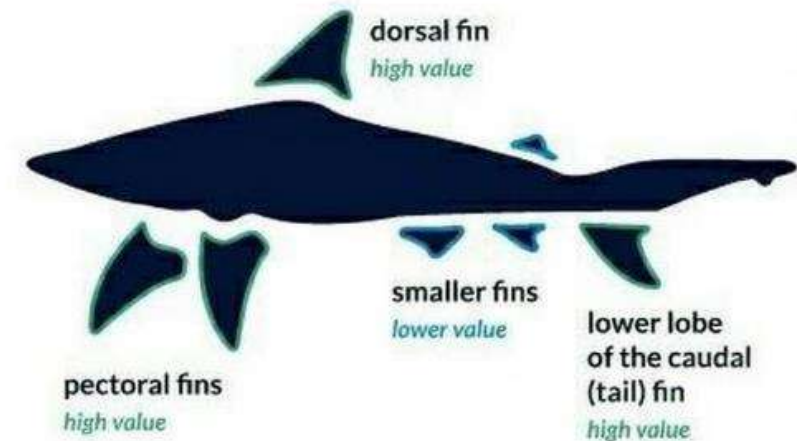


**The current changes to the new Fisheries Standard will see a Fins Naturally Attached policy in force for shark species**

The MSC has a zero-tolerance approach to shark finning in MSC certified fisheries. This is delivered via scope requirements in the Fisheries Certification Process (v2.2) and shark finning scoring in the Fisheries Standard.

The MSC's intent is that any vessel engaged in the practice of shark finning cannot operate within an MSC certified fishery.

The MSC expects fishery clients to be proactive and responsive to any information that indicates shark finning has taken place or is taking place within a UoA/UoC.



# OPPORTUNITIES FOR TUNA

The Board decision on the Unit of Assessment definition could rapidly increase volumes of tuna available if FAD fisheries become certified. No compartmentalization will be allowed in certified fisheries after March 2023

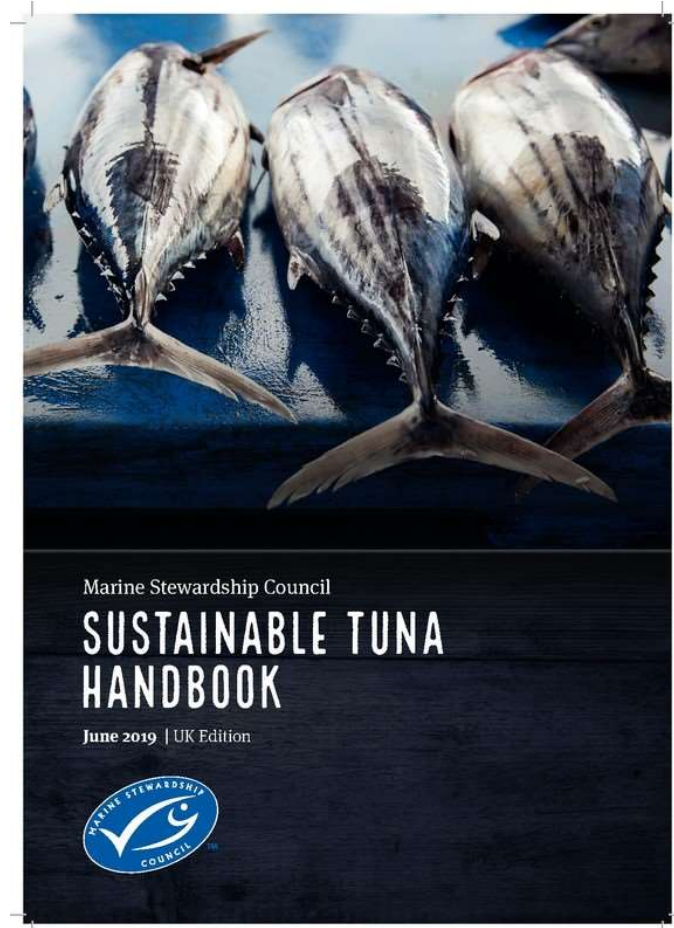
The large volume of tuna available presents an opportunity to increase MSC labeled tuna sold thereby recognizing and rewarding sustainable fisheries.

When the tuna RFMOs implement effective harvest strategies this will be positive news for MSC fisheries, the MSC and our theory of change.



# MSC TUNA RESOURCES

- [MSC Tuna Fisheries Search](#)
- [MSC Tuna Webpage](#) (English)
- [MSC tonnikala Webseite](#) (Finnish)
- [MSC tun Website](#) (Danish)
- [MSC tonfisk Website](#) (Swedish)







THANK YOU

Bill Holden,  
Senior Tuna Fisheries Outreach Manager  
[bill.holden@msc.org](mailto:bill.holden@msc.org)