



Sri Lankan Longline FIP Bulletin No.3

The new Sri Lanka longline fishery improvement project (FIP) is an initiative of the Seafood Exporters' Association of Sri Lanka (SEASL). The FIP is a tripartite collaboration by the SEASL with government authorities responsible for regulating and managing the fishery and promoting exports, and the longline boat owners' associations engaged in harvesting yellowfin & bigeye tuna & swordfish. The FIP's goal is to ensure that these fisheries can continue indefinitely at a level that maintains the biological health & abundance of yellowfin & bigeye tuna & swordfish stocks & the diversity, structure & function of the habitats and ecosystem upon which the fisheries depend. The FIP aims to minimize any adverse effects the fishery may cause by means of a management system implemented in conformity with national & international laws. The FIP's long term goal is to maintain the present & future economic and social options & benefits arising from the fishery, in accordance with international norms for social responsibility & equity in supply chains for Sri Lankan seafood. Details of actions implemented by the members of the new longline FIP over the last six months are described in this the 3rd edition of the Sri Lankan Longline FIP Bulletin.

The following organisations, agencies and exporters are members of the new Sri Lanka longline FIP



Improving the biological status of fisheries



Senior officers and staff of the Department of Fisheries & Aquatic Resources (DFAR) and the National Aquatic Resources, Research & Development Agency (NARA) worked to maintain Sri Lanka's high level of [compliance](#) with the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) requirements during the second half of 2018.

The IOTC's **16th Working Party on Billfish** was held in September in South Africa. Officers from DFAR and NARA presented Sri Lanka's latest data and information regarding swordfish catch at the [meeting](#). Swordfish is one of the three target species under the new Sri Lankan Longline FIP. In October DFAR and NARA officers attended the IOTC's **9th Working Party on Methods** and the **20th Working Party on Tropical Tunas**. The meetings were held in Seychelles. Copies of the IOTC reports on each meeting can be downloaded [here](#) and [here](#). The **21st session of the IOTC's Scientific Committee** was also held in the Seychelles between 3rd and 7th of December 2018. Officers from DFAR and NARA presented Sri Lanka's Scientific report to the meeting. A copy of the IOTC's report on the meeting can be found [here](#).



SEASL / NARA FIP Sub Project - Stock Assessment: In November the SEASL's Technical Committee approved a new sub project in collaboration with NARA to train and build the capacity of scientists and fishery managers on IOTC stock assessment methods, harvest strategy evaluation and collect data. The sub project will also collect data and conduct stock assessment of FIP target species, using non-conventional stock assessment methods. Technical training and capacity building will be conducted by Dr Toshihide Kitakado, Professor, Department of Marine Biosciences, Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology. Dr Toshihide Kitakado is the Chairperson of the IOTC Working Party on Methods. The technical training and capacity building programme will take place on 13th, 14th and 15th March 2019. The collection of species, length, sex and weight data for the non-conventional assessment of target species' stock status will commence in February 2019. Data will be collected in collaboration with members of the SEASL, with technical assistance from DFAR and NARA. The data will be analysed jointly by DFAR, NARA and the longline FIP.

Improving the ecological status of the longline fishery



BRT / DFAR FIP Sub Project: The formulation of a new Sri Lanka National Plan of Action for the Conservation & Management of Sharks (SLNPOA-Sharks) was completed during the second half of 2018.

The new SLNPOA-Sharks (2018 – 2022) provides an overview of the Sri Lankan Shark Catch between 2014 and 2017. It contains an analysis of the Shark Catch by gear type and fishery (*i.e.* within and beyond Sri Lanka's exclusive economic zone – EEZ). The report differentiates **directed** and **non-directed** Shark Catch, wherein Sharks are the **target** or **non-target** species respectively. The data and analysis presented in the new SLNPOA-Sharks highlights the relatively low level of interaction between Sri Lanka's EEZ and beyond EEZ fisheries with Sharks *per se* (< 2% of the Total Catch). The report draws attention to the even lower level of interaction between longline fishing and Sharks.



A draft final report of the SLNPOA-Sharks (2018 – 2022) was completed at the end of September. The draft report was presented to the National Technical Committee for discussion on 19th October. The Technical Committee comprised representatives of the DFAR, NARA, Sri Lanka Customs (SLC), Sri Lanka Navy, Department of Wildlife Conservation and the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority. Comments and suggestions received during the Technical Committee meeting, together with further consultations with NARA, DFAR, SLC and the Blue Resources Trust (BRT) were incorporated into the draft final SLNPOA-Sharks (2018 – 2022) in November.



The Final Report was submitted to the DFAR on 11th December 2018. The new SLNPOA Sharks (2018 – 2022) highlights the key Shark species for which conservation measures are required *i.e.* thresher, oceanic whitetip and whale sharks. It also contains new initiatives to improve the management of **directed** and **non-directed** Shark Catch. The Final Report identifies the key species caught in the **non-directed** Shark Catch *i.e.* silky shark, blue shark and mobulids. The Final Report draws attention to the need for more data and information to be collected on these species over the next five years.



Sri Lanka National Plan of Action
for the Conservation and Management of Sharks

(SLNPOA – Sharks 2018 - 2022)

Final Report

MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT
AND RURAL ECONOMY
DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES & AQUATIC RESOURCES
NATIONAL AQUATIC RESOURCES, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

SRI LANKA

December, 2018

Co-financed by the Blue Resources Trust / Pew Charitable Trust

DFAR will review and finalize the new SLNPOA-Sharks (2018 – 2022) in January. Thereafter it will be sent to the ministry. Once approved, the new SLNPOA-Sharks (2018 – 2022) will be submitted to the IOTC by the ministry in 2019.

District level workshops to introduce the new SLNPOA-Sharks (2018 – 2022) to primary stakeholders (*i.e.* boat owners / fishermen) will be conducted by DFAR from January 2019. The new SLNPOA-Sharks (2018 - 2022) will enable Sri Lanka to maintain its current status in respect to IOTC compliance and management measures (click [here](#) for details). The report will also improve the fishery's score against Principle 2 of the Marine Stewardship Council's (MSC) Fishery Standard – Minimising Environmental Impact.



The review and revision of the SLNPOA – Sharks was co-financed by the Blue Resource Trust. The sub project is implemented by pelagikos pvt ltd in collaboration with DFAR and NARA

Improving the management of the longline fishery



SEA PACT / DFAR FIP Sub Project – Local / Crew-based Observer Programme: In June [SEA PACT](#) - a group of leading North American Seafood Companies dedicated to driving stewardship and continuous improvement of social, economic, and environmental responsibility throughout the global seafood supply chain - agreed to co-finance the development and implementation a Local / Crew-based Observer pilot programme with DFAR. The pilot programme seeks to address the challenge of collecting independently verifiable catch and scientific data from Sri Lanka's large fleet of less than 24 m multi-day fishing vessels. 1,350 vessels operate beyond Sri Lanka's EEZ.

The IOTC's [Resolution 11/04 On a Regional Observer Scheme](#) requires contracting parties to collect verified catch data and other scientific data for tuna and tuna-like species in the IOTC area of competence. *At least 5% of the number of operations/sets for each gear type by the fleet of each contracting party while fishing in the IOTC area of competence of 24 meters overall length and over, and under 24 meters if they fish outside their EEZ shall be covered by this observer scheme. For vessels less than 24 meters if they fish outside their EEZ, the above mentioned coverage should be achieved progressively by January 2013.* Sri Lanka has yet to meet the 5% target for the 1,350 multiday vessel fishing beyond Sri Lanka's EEZ.

In July a new data collection protocol for local (crew-based) observers was developed by the FIP in consultation with the DFAR in Colombo, Negombo and Chilaw. The new data collection protocol combines existing logbook data and semi-structured pre and post departure interviews with electronic temporal and spatial data for each fish caught. The new data collection protocol was discussed with multi-day boat owners' associations in Negombo and Chilaw in August. By the end of the September the first two Local Observers had been trained by officers of the DFO Negombo, prior to their departure from Negombo and Dikkowita Fishery Harbours.



By the end of November 20 Local (Crew-based) Observers had been trained by DFAR and the FIP to collect catch and scientific data, with electronic spatial and temporal references from less than 24 m multi-day longline fishing vessels. By the end of the year the DFAR's District Fisheries Office (DFO) in Negombo had recovered independently verifiable trip, catch and scientific data from 17 out of the 20 vessels. The data was processed by the DFAR's Electronic Data Unit (EDU) in Colombo, then analysed by pelagikos pvt ltd. The analysis of data form all 17 vessels will be completed by pelagikos pvt ltd in March 2019.



The new data collection protocol and rationale was presented to the ITOC by DFAR in November at [14th Working Party on Data Collection and Statistics](#). The proposal received positive comments from the Chair, the IOTC Secretariat, Australia, Taiwan, Spain, France, South Africa and from Pakistan. The members of the WPDCS **acknowledged** the efforts of Sri Lanka to set up a data collection system based on digital photography, electronic logbooks and crew as observers, on small, multi-day fishing vessels (9.7 m to 28.6m / average 12.4 m) fishing beyond Sri Lanka's EEZ - given the numerous logistical difficulties.





The WPDCS **noted** that the use of digital photographs in the newly established data collection system, the electronic logbook and the crew as observers, allowed the data to be independently verifiable and that metadata such as date, time and location could be extracted from the photographs, implementing *de-facto* as a manual electronic monitoring system (EMS). Several proposals to develop the Local Observer Programme to the next level were received, notably from South Africa and Australia. DFAR will work with the IOTC, boat owners and skippers to further improve the Local Observer Programme in April 2019. Under the second phase of the sub project DFAR will select a further 10 to 15 five skippers and their crew as Local Observers, with the aim of achieving 100% coverage for IOTC catch and scientific data.

A prototype for the new **elogbook lite** smartphone app designed by DFAR’s EDUwas developed by hyNetz pvt ltd in October and November. A working demonstration of the app was completed in December. DFAR will commence testing the **elogbook lite** app in January 2019. The app will be deployed by DFAR later in the year.



The design, development and implementation of the DFAR’s Local Observer Programme is co-financed by SEA PACT. The sub project is implemented by pelagikos pvt ltd in collaboration with DFAR and Boat Owners’ Associations in Chilaw and Negombo

Social responsibility & improving economic equity



The Technical Committee appointed by the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (SLEDB) at the beginning of the year met during the second half of the year, to explore market opportunities associated with developing a brand identity for **Sri Lankan seafood**. It is envisaged tht the brand will build on Sri Lanka’s global reputation for high quality seafood products and emphasise the unique selling points associated with **Sri Lankan seafood**, such as sustainability, social responsibility and equity in supply chains.



SLL FIP / Fishery Status Report

The results of a MSC approved *pre-assessment* conducted by CapMarine (Pty) Ltd in 2018 suggested that the three target species under the new longline FIP are operating at a level consistent with a conditional pass of MSC’s Fishery Standard. However

Performance Indicators	≥80	60-79	<60	Overall
Target Species				
Yellowfin Tuna	12	14	02	0.68
Bigeye Tuna	12	13	02	0.69
Swordfish	12	13	02	0.69



the pre-assessment concluded that all three fisheries would fail a full assessment because two of MSC’s 28 Performance Indicators scored < 60. The MSC approved *pre-assessment* was co-financed by New England Seafood International



Consultations were held with members of the new FIP throughout the reporting period. A national steering committee meeting is scheduled for early 2019. The new longline FIP was upgraded from a **BASIC FIP** to a **COMPREHENSIVE FIP** by FishChoice on fisheryprogress.org in December 2018. To view further details about the longline FIP on fisheryprogress please click [here](#).

Seven of Sri Lanka’s leading seafood manufacturers - **Ceylon Fresh Seafood, Global Seafood, Jay Seafood, Lihini Seafood, NorthWest Fishery, Taprobane Seafood Group & Tropic Sri Lanka** - are Corporate Members of the new FIP



GLOBAL SEAFOODS [PVT] LTD



Lihini Sea Foods



NORTHWEST FISHERY



Tropic SRI LANKA

Soft copies of this edition of the Sri Lanka Longline FIP Bulletin are available in English and Sinhala. For more details about the new longline FIP please email steve@pelagikos.lk