



Sri Lankan Longline FIP Bulletin No.4

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 these 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 the 4th edition of the Sri Lankan Longline FIP Bulletin.

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



Improvements to the biological status of the fisheries



MFAR / IOTC Sub Project - Contracting Party Compliance with IOTC's Agreement

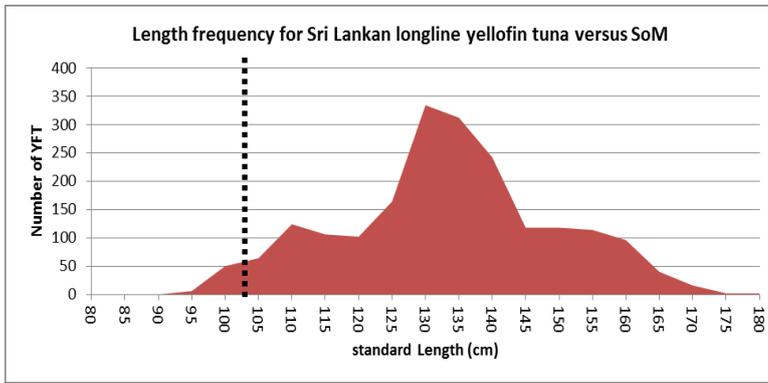
Senior officers and staff of the Department of Fisheries & Aquatic Resources (DFAR) and the National Aquatic Resources, Research & Development Agency (NARA) worked to maintain Sri Lanka's high level of compliance with the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) requirements regarding the biological status of the stock during the first half of 2019. Officers from the DFAR and NARA together with representatives of the SEASL attended the 5th Session of the Technical Committee on Allocation Criteria and the 2nd Technical Committee on Performance Review, held in Seychelles in March, as well as the 3rd Session of the IOTC Technical Committee on Management Procedures held in India in June. Copies of the Committees' report can be found on the IOTC web site (click [here](#)).



SEASL / NARA FIP Sub Project - Capacity Building for Conventional & Non-Conventional Stock Assessment Methods:

The FIP commenced a new sub project to improve senior scientists' and fishery managers' knowledge of IOTC' stock assessment methods and harvest strategy evaluation in March. The new sub project is co-finance by Corporate Members of the SEASL. Dr Toshihide Kitakado, Professor, Department of Marine Biosciences, Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology conducted a three day technical training and capacity building workshop in March at NARA. Dr Kitakado is the Chairperson of the IOTC Working Party on Methods. The technical training and capacity building programme covered both theoretical frameworks for stock assessment and practical sessions including data manipulation and analysis. The sub project will also enable the FIP to collect scientific data on which to run alternative stock assessment methods for data deficient fisheries, for all three FIP target species.





The collection of scientific data to assess the stock status of yellowfin and bigeye tuna and swordfish using data deficient methods commenced in March and continued throughout the reporting period. By the end of June length, sex and weight data had been collected from 2,272 yellowfin (see left) and 48 bigeye tuna and from 1,604 swordfish. Five of the seven Corporate Members of the longline FIP generously contributed their staff

time (and fish) for data collection. The collection and analysis of data using alternative stock assessment methods for data deficient fisheries will be completed by the FIP during the next semester.

Improvements to the ecological status of the fishery



BRT / DFAR FIP Sub Project - Sri Lankan National Plan of Action – Sharks (2018 – 2022)

The DFAR successfully conducted five regional workshops during the first half of 2019. In the workshops DFAR and NARA officers presented and discussed the new Sri Lanka National Plan of Action for the Conservation & Management of Sharks (SLNPOA–Sharks 2018 – 2022) with more than 200 DFAR officers and fishermen who catch Sharks. The completion of the workshops concluded the sub project to update and revise the new SLNPOA–Sharks (2018 – 2022). The sub project was co-financed by **Blue Resources Trust** and the Pew Charitable Trust and completed by the FIP on 30th June 2019.



Improvements to the management of the fishery



SEA PACT / DFAR FIP Sub Project - Local Observer Programme

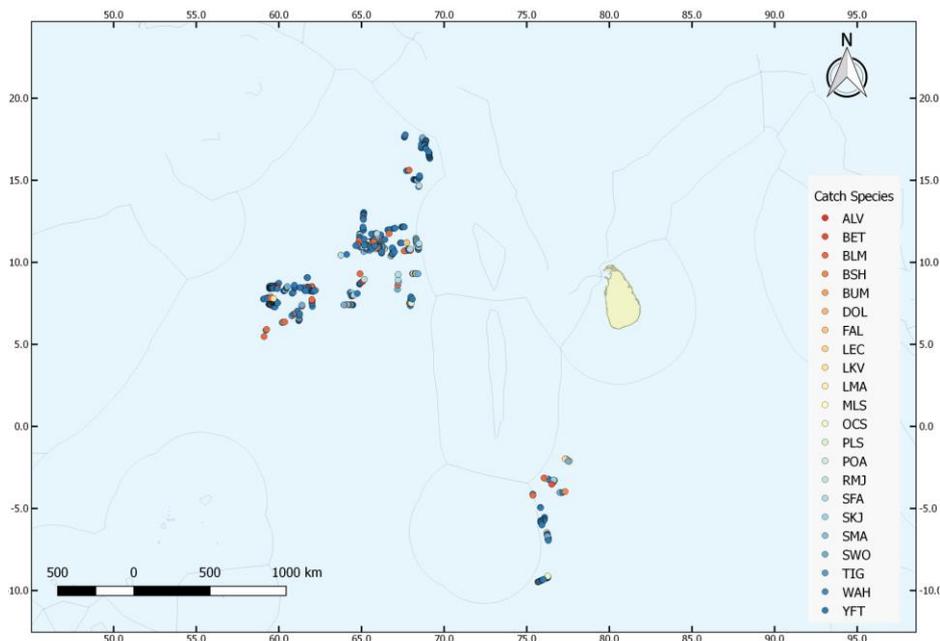
The IOTC's [Resolution 11/04 On a Regional Observer Scheme](#) requires contracting parties to collect verified catch data and other scientific data for tuna and tuna-like species from at least 5% of the number of operations/sets for each gear type for vessels less than 24 meters if they fish outside their EEZ. The small size of Sri Lanka's 1,350 plus multiday fishing fleet (average size = 12.4 m) means it is impossible to safely deploy independent observers on these vessels. As a consequence, Sri Lanka is unable to meet the IOTC's requirement for verified catch data and other scientific data for almost all of its fleet fishing outside Sri Lanka's EEZ.

In 2017 Dr. Moazzam Khan from the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) made a presentation to the DFAR about a crew based observer programme that had been successfully implemented by WWF Pakistan. Taking WWF's model as a template, the FIP developed a simple, low cost catch data collection protocol that combines existing logbook data with semi-structured post-harvest interviews and real time, digital data incorporating species, length, weight, temporal and spatial data (see right). The FIP's Local Observer Programme is co-financed by **SEAPACT** - 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.



Between November 5th and January 17th independently verifiable catch and other scientific data collected by 20 skippers using electronic tablets (18) or digital cameras (02) were transferred from the District Fisheries Offices in Chilaw and Negombo to the DFAR's Information Technology Unit in Colombo for processing. The processed information and data were uploaded to a database for analysis by researchers at pelagikos pvt ltd. The results of the Local Observer Programme's pilot phase demonstrated that *verifiable catch and other scientific data related to fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species in the IOTC area of competence* can be collected from Sri Lanka's large fleet of less than 24 m multi-day boats, in accordance with IOTC's Resolution 11/04.

The Local Observer Programme's protocol allowed the DFAR to collect 33 data fields required for fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species in the IOTC area. Fields included trip, gear, set and catch data, and scientific data pertaining to individual fish and other capture species caught. DFAR was able to achieve more than 80% compliance with IOTC data requirements related to the trip, the gear and each longline set. However the protocol was less successful in generating scientific data for the entire catch.



Only 30% of the total catch was observed by skippers during the pilot phase. The level of compliance with IOTC data requirements for the observed catch ranged from 40% (for sex) to 100% (for Local Name, English Name, IOTC Code and Outcome). Weight was recorded from 97% of the observed catch. Location, date and time data were gathered from 75% of the observed catch. The Local Observer Programme protocol also enabled the DFAR to collect verified catch and other scientific data related to secondary and endangered, threatened and protected species such as sharks and turtles (see left).



All participants agreed that the Local Observer protocol could be improved to achieve 100% compliance with the IOTC's minimum verified catch and other scientific data requirements for fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species. A series of recommendations were proposed and discussed with DFAR in Colombo, DFO officers, boat owners and skippers and approved for the second phase of the Local Observer Programme in March.

The second phase of the Local Observer Programme (15 boats) commenced in April and will be completed in July. The FIP requested and received permission from **SEAPACT** to extend the project period by three months (to August), to accommodate a second phase of the sub project within the existing budget allocation.



The prototype **elogbook lite** app designed by the DFAR's Information Technology Unit and developed by hyNetz pvt ltd for smartphones was completed by the developer in June. The new app is intended to replace the current paper logbook used to collect trip and catch data from most multiday fishing vessels. The design and development of the **elogbook lite** app is also co-financed by **SEAPACT**.



MFAR / IOTC Sub Project - Contracting Party Compliance with IOTC's Agreement

Representatives from DFAR attended the IOTC's *Workshop relating to the studies on Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) & Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS)* held in Mozambique in February. Officers from DFAR also attended the *16th Session of the Compliance Committee* and the *23rd Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission* held in India in June. Copies of the Workshop and Committees' report can be found on the IOTC web site (click [here](#)).

Social responsibility & improving economic equity



SLEDB Sub Project - Branding Sri Lankan Seafood

The Technical Committee appointed by the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (SLEDB) drafted Terms of Reference for a marketing agency to create a brand identify for **Sri Lankan Seafood** in May. The brand identity will build on Sri Lanka's global reputation for high quality seafood products and emphasise the unique selling points associated with **Sri Lankan Seafood**.

Sri Lankan Longline Fishery Status Update



SEASL / NESI - MSC approved Pre Assessment

The MSC approved **pre-assessment** of the fishery conducted by CapMarine (Pty) Ltd in 2018 indicated that the three target fisheries were operating at a level consistent with a conditional pass of MSC's Fishery Standard (SG > 0.60). However all three fisheries failed the **pre-assessment** because two Performance Indicators (PIs) scored < 0.60. The MSC approved **pre-assessment** was co-financed by New England Seafood International.

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

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FIP at a Glance

FISHERY STATUS ⓘ FIP is addressing 28 of 28 indicators

Current Status:

Starting Evaluation: April 01, 2018

FIP PROGRESS

Progress Rating ⓘ

C

SOME RECENT PROGRESS

Actions Complete

● Complete ● Incomplete

Next Update Due ⓘ

DEC 2019

Target End Date

MAR 2021

ADDITIONAL IMPACTS

ROUNDABLE



SEASL Sub Project - fisheryprogress.org

The new Sri Lankan longline FIP is a **'COMPREHENSIVE FIP'** according to fisheryprogress.org as it addresses all of 28 PIs under the MSC's Fishery Standard. The FIP's profile was updated in June. The FIP was rated **C – Some Recent Progress** by fisheryprogress.org. As noted above only 2 PIs (7%) were scored RED, 93% scored YELLOW or GREEN in 2018. 17% of the actions planned have been completed. To further improve the FIP's rating new investments are needed to

- 1) Continue and expand the implementation of the Local Observer Programme on < 24 m vessels to cover six District Fisheries Offices
- 2) Introduce a Harvest Control Strategy with Rules & Tools for the fishery
- 3) Improve the National Observer Programme on > 24 m vessels
- 4) Review and update the NPOA IUU Fishing 2018 – 2022
- 5) Ensure the live release of endangered, threatened & protected species

Seven of Sri Lanka's leading seafood manufacturers are Corporate Members of the new longline FIP



GLOBAL SEAFOODS [PVT] LTD



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