



Progress Report

Fishery Improvement Project for the Republic of the Cook Islands Domestically-based Pelagic Longline Yellowfin Tuna Fishery

June 2016

Below are activities conducted to implement the Cook Islands FIP workplan between August 2014 and June 2016.

- **August 2014:** A traceability audit was completed for the LTFV Cook Islands fishery – a public version of the audit report is available on the Cook Islands FIP website at http://fishing-living.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/LTFV-Traceability-Assessment-Cook-Islands-Public-Report-Final_22Sept14.pdf.
- **June 2015:** South Pacific albacore caught by LTFV vessels in the Cook Islands longline fishery received certification against the MSC fishery standard. The MSC website for the Cook Islands MSC fishery is: <https://www.msc.org/track-a-fishery/fisheries-in-the-program/certified/pacific/cook-islands-tuna/cook-islands-tuna>.
- **Sept. 2015:** LTFV had an independent social responsibility audit conducted by ME Certification using standards developed by the International Labor Organisation 'Work in Fishing Convention'
- **Sept 2015:** Luen Thai Seafood International was certified against the MSC chain-of-custody standard. <https://www.msc.org/newsroom/news/cook-islands-albacore-longline-fishery-achieves-msc-certification>
- **October 2015:** FIP Participants signed a joint letter organized by the WCPO Tuna MSC Alignment Group sent to WCPFC CCMs – see Joint letter of 8 October 2015 submitted to WCPFC Members [DOWNLOAD](#)
- **December 2015:** SFP longline best practice guidance report, and other sources of information on best practices for pelagic longline tuna fisheries are posted to the FIP website and distributed to FIP participants (<http://fishing-living.org/longline-best-practices-for-sustainable-fishing>). Best practices were also distributed to captains and crew through capacity building training workshops.

- **January 2016:** Cook Islands government improves precautionary approach by planning implementation of the PNA longline vessel day scheme, providing a new input control mechanism (this in addition to planned implementation of the Tokelau Arrangement output control, and existing limited entry input control).
- **Jan. 2016:** Cook Islands government initiates implementation of the Tokelau Arrangement quota system for South Pacific albacore – a new output control for the Cook Islands fishery. <http://www.cookislandsnews.com/item/53959-cooks-setting-the-trend-for-fisheries-management/53959-cooks-setting-the-trend-for-fisheries-management>
- **January 2016:** Participants prepare updated training materials for train-the-trainer workshops, and plan for a refresher workshop to be held in April 2016.
- **April 2016:** LTFV has been developing radio frequency identification tags (RFIDs) and initiated their use in the Cook Islands fishery in April 2016, in partnership with Anova and other suppliers.
- **April 2016:** A train-the-trainer workshop was convened - the purpose of the workshop was to train Luen Thai Fishing Venture (LTFV) staff who in turn will train fishing base managers to instruct longline captains in methods to handle and release at-risk species, government longline rules, LTFV policy banning the use of gear designs and methods to target sharks and banning the retention of sharks including shark fins, proper use of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community/Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency logbook form for pelagic longline fishers, and training in species identification to improve logbook entries. For more information, see <http://tinyurl.com/training-CI> or <http://fishing-living.org/sustainability-training-conducted-for-ltfv-staff/#sthash.DwJ1hPRS.dpbs>
- **April 2016:** MSC convenes CABs for a WCPO harmonization meeting (attached is the meeting report that will be released by MSC soon, fyi)
- **May 2016:** LTFV has installed complete electronic monitoring systems on 25 longline vessels that seasonally operate in the Cook Islands, and intends to complete installing systems on the remaining 5 vessels by the end of 2016.
- **May 2016:** FIP participants contribute to development of a WCPO Tuna MSC Alignment Group workplan and development of a 2016 annual short-term position statement to push for improvements with sub-regional (PNA, FFA) and regional (WCPFC) management systems.
- **May 2016:** Expedited MSC assessment of yellowfin tuna announced on 24 May 2016 (<https://www.msc.org/track-a-fishery/fisheries-in-the-program/certified/pacific/cook-islands-tuna/expedited-assessment-yellowfin-tuna>)
- **June 2016:** FIP participants sign onto to Alignment Group joint letter, to be sent later in the month.