



## Report from the Capacity-Building Workshop to Train Cook Islands Pelagic Longline Captains

On 26-27 August 2014, fisheries consultant Mike McCoy met with staff from the Cook Islands Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR) and the Huanan Fishery Cook Islands Company, a subsidiary of Luen Thai Fishing Venture (LTFV), to review the objectives, draft workshop presentation and training materials for a workshop that Mike would lead on 28 August. The purpose of the workshop was to augment the capacity of Cook Islands government and longline fishing company staff to lead workshops for captains of longline vessels that fish in the Cook Islands Exclusive Economic Zone. On 28 August Mike led a two-hour workshop attended by MMR and fishing company staff, and by available longline captains. Mike plans to conduct a second capacity-building workshop in mid-2015. The intent is for MMR and fishing company staff to lead future workshops so that all longline captains of vessels authorized to fish in the Cook Islands waters attend at least one training workshop.

The aim of the workshops is to provide longline captains with an improved understanding of: (i) Cook Islands rules for longline vessel operators, (ii) how to properly complete government logbook forms, (iii) how to use a guide to identify catch to the species level, to augment the rigor of logbook records, (iv) prescribed methods to handle and release sea turtles, sharks, rays, cetaceans and seabirds to maximize the probability of their survival after release, and (v) LTFV Venture company policy restricting gear and fishing methods and prohibiting the retention of sharks, including shark fins.

The agenda of the 28 August capacity-building workshop follows:

- Welcome and Explanation of Workshop Objectives
- Why we should avoid and minimize the catch and mortality of endangered, threatened and protected species, including sea turtles, whales and dolphins, sharks and rays, and seabirds.
- Summary of Regulations for Cook Islands Licensed Pelagic Longline Vessels
- LTFV company policy banning the use of gear to target sharks, and banning the retention of sharks
- Guidance for proper use of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community/Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency 2009 logbook form for pelagic longline fishers
- Introduction to the Secretariat of the Pacific Community species identification guide for longline fishers
- Handling and release equipment to be kept onboard, and guidance on prescribed handling and release methods for sea turtles, whales and dolphins, sharks and rays, and seabirds.

Workshop content contained in Powerpoint slides was presented in Chinese. Elaboration on specific topics was done in English and LTFV personnel served as interpreters to provide Chinese translation. Discussion between captains and the trainer was likewise facilitated by LTFV interpretation.

The training materials referenced during the workshop are listed below. Most of these materials are available online, in English and Chinese, at <https://sites.google.com/site/seafoodcompaniestunamanagement/home/training-materials-for-longline-fishers>. The Cook Islands Ministry of Marine Resources and Luen Thai Fishing Venture plan to provide hard copies of each of these materials, as well as a set of handling and release equipment, to each vessel captain so that every vessel in the fishery has them onboard.

- Secretariat of the Pacific Community 2009 logbook form for pelagic longline vessels (available from SPC website, in several languages)
- *Marine Species Identification Manual for Horizontal Longline Fishermen*, Secretariat of the Pacific Community
- *WCPFC Guidelines for the Handling of Sea Turtles*, Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
- *Methods for longline fishers to safely handle and release unwanted sharks and rays*, Eric Gilman, Hawaii Pacific University and Luen Thai Fishing Venture
- *Whale and dolphin handling and release guidelines for longline fishers*, Eric Gilman, Hawaii Pacific University and Luen Thai Fishing Venture
- *Safely Releasing Seabirds & Avoiding Bird Capture*, Eric Gilman, National Audubon Society
- *Summary of pelagic longline domestic regulations*, Cook Islands Ministry of Marine Resources
- *Luen Thai Fishing Venture Company Policy Ban on Targeting and Retaining Sharks*, Luen Thai Fishing Venture ([http://183.90.188.162/LTFV\\_shark\\_policy\\_Bilingual\\_R2.pdf](http://183.90.188.162/LTFV_shark_policy_Bilingual_R2.pdf))

A version of Mike McCoy's workshop presentation in PDF will be posted to the website: <https://sites.google.com/site/seafoodcompaniestunamanagement/home/training-materials-for-longline-fishers>

The following is a list of participants of the 28 August workshop:

- Mike McCoy, workshop lead
- Isaiah Hunkin, Cook Islands Ministry of Marine Resources, American Samoa Fisheries Field Office
- Zhuang (Wing) Wenliang, Base Manager, Huanan Fishery Cook Islands Company
- Qian Faping, Fleet manager (shore based senior captain), Huanan Fishery Cook Islands Company
- Lin (Henry) Shuisong, Accountant, Huanan Fishery Cook Islands Company
- Wang Hao, Assistant, Huanan Fishery Cook Islands Company
- Chen Dongjun, Assistant (in charge of warehouse), Huanan Fishery Cook Islands Company
- Zhang Yongzheng, Captain, Hua Nan Yu No. 723, Huanan Fishery Cook Islands Company
- Zhang Xipeng, Captain, Shen Lian Cheng No. 884, Huanan Fishery Cook Islands Company