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# Third Annual Surveillance Report

# New Zealand Albacore Tuna Troll Fishery

## Certificate No.: MML- F-102

## Intertek Fisheries Certification Ltd
## June 2014

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# 1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

**Scope against which the surveillance is undertaken:** MSC Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fishing as applied to the New Zealand Albacore Tuna Troll Fishery

**Species**: Albacore tuna *Thunnus alalunga*

**Area**: ALB1 NZ EEZ

**Method of capture**: Troll

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| **Date of Surveillance Visit:** | **29 – 30 May 2014** | | | |
| **Initial Certification** | **Date: Date: May 2011** | | **Certificate Ref: MML-F.102** | |
| **Surveillance stage** | **1st** | **2nd** | **3rd** | **4th** |
| **Surveillance team:** | **Lead Assessor:** **Jo Akroyd**<br>**Assessor(s):** **Kevin McLoughlin** | | | |
| **Company Name:**<br>**Address:** | Tuna Management Association of New Zealand<br>P O Box 175<br>Nelson<br>New Zealand | | | |
| **Contact 1** | Doug Saunders-Loder | | | |
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# 2.0 RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report contains the findings of the third surveillance cycle in relation to this fishery.

The client's response to the Conditions of Certification was set out in a Client Action Plan (CAP), which was appended to the Public Certification Report. Progress associated with the actions set forth in the CAP was examined as a part of this surveillance audit. For each Condition, the report sets out progress to date. This progress has been evaluated by the Intertek Fisheries Certification (IFC) Audit Team (set out below as 'Observations' and 'Conclusion') against the commitments made in the CAP. This assessment includes a re-evaluation of the scoring allocated to the relevant Performance Indicators (PIs) in the original MSC assessment. Where the requirements of a Condition are met, the PI is re-scored at 80 or more and the Condition is "closed out".

The surveillance audit methodology, as defined in the current version of the MSC Certification Requirements is followed in this audit and so the MSC criteria for determining the level of surveillance audit that the fishery requires is followed (see Annex 3).

NZ 3rd audit:
Condition 1: is considered to be on target and will be reassessed at the next annual surveillance.

Condition 2: progress has been made however the requirement for the adoption of Harvest Control Rules by the Commission needs to be pursued more strongly, along with other approaches that are being undertaken.

Condition 3 was closed following the Year 1 surveillance audit.

Progress has been made on all recommendations.

**Information Sources:**

**Meetings**
(NB all stakeholder from the full assessment were contacted prior to the surveillance audit taking place)

| Date | Representative | Position | Organisation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 29th May 2014 | Rob Tilney | Consultant to client | Clement & Associates |
| 29th May 2014 | Doug Saunders-Loder | Client representative | Tuna Management Association of NZ |
| 29th May 2014 | Arthur Hore (phone discussion) | Highly Migratory Species Fishery Manager | Ministry of Primary Industries |
| 29th May 2014 | Doug Saunders-Loder<br>Rob Tilney | Client representative<br><br>Consultant to client | Tuna Management Association of NZ<br><br>Clement & Associates |

**Reports etc**

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**Standards and Guidelines used:**

1. MSC Principles and Criteria
2. MSC Certification Requirements v1.3, 14 January 2013
3. Guidance to the MSC Certification Requirements, v 1.3, 14 January 2013

| **Stock status and Catch Data** | |
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| **Update on Sock Status** | Stock assessments for South Pacific albacore tuna are conducted by the Oceanic Fisheries Programme of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), as science provider to the WCPFC. Fishery overviews and summary information on the status of tuna stocks are published periodically and are discussed at scientific meetings of the WCPFC. These reports are available on the WCPFC website (http://www.wcpfc.int/meetings/all). All countries operating fleets in the region report catches, effort and size frequency data if sampled. SPC maintains a central database for the catch, effort, size frequency, tagging, biological data, observer, sampling and other data from the fishery.<br><br>The South Pacific albacore assessment data consist of fishery-specific catch, effort and length-frequency data and tag release-recapture data. The assessment uses the stock assessment model and computer software known as MULTIFAN-CL (MFCL), which was developed originally to deal with length frequency rather than age data (Fournier *et al*., 1998, Hoyle and Davies, 2009). The assessment model includes 20 annual age classes, including a group age 20+ years old. Growth forms part of the MFCL model, as does fishing and natural mortality. A major complexity comes from the detailed breakdown of the fishing fleets, since each fleet has different selectivity and catchability parameters. The assessment is continually improved as more data become available and model structure is enhanced.<br><br>An updated South Pacific albacore stock assessment is not due until 2015. The most recent South Pacific albacore stock assessments are fully described in Hoyle *et al.* (2012) and Hoyle (2011). The same underlying structural assumptions have been used in the assessment for several years, but there were some substantial revisions to key data sets in the 2012 assessment, specifically the longline CPUE indices, catch, and size data. Overall, the 2012 model provided an improvement to the fit to the key data sets compared to 2011 indicating an improvement in the consistency among the main data sources, principally the longline CPUE indices and the associated length frequency data (Hoyle *et al.*, 2012). However, there continues to be conflict between the CPUE and length frequency data. A key source of structural uncertainty is that the model currently includes only a single sex and the same growth curve for all locations, whereas albacore growth is now known to vary between sexes and with longitude (Williams *et al.* 2012). The model results are highly sensitive to the growth curve used. Sensitivity analyses are conducted covering a set of uncertainties identified by the stock assessment scientists.<br><br>The 2012 assessment indicates that fishing mortality (exploitation) rates for adult albacore are moderately low from the early 1970s to the mid-1990s, and show a large increase since that time for adult fish (Hoyle *et al*., 2012). Estimated fishing mortalities for the fully recruited age classes have reached moderate levels since 2006, averaging about 0.25 for adults in the peak year 2010, and averaging about 0.25 for fully recruited age classes.<br><br>The current WCPFC practice is that the Scientific Committee (SC) issues an agreed statement on the current status of the stock, management advice and implications, which is forwarded to the WCPFC annual session for consideration of any management measures recommended.<br><br>The 8th regular meeting of the WCPFC Scientific Committee (WCPFC-SC, 2012) adopted the stock status of South Pacific albacore as estimated by the 2012 assessment (Hoyle *et al*., 2012). The 2012 assessment results are generally similar to, but more optimistic than those of the 2009 and 2011 assessments Key conclusions, based on the median of the grid of alternative scenarios explored, are that **overfishing is not occurring** and the stock is **not in an overfished state**. |

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| | Spawning potential depletion levels ($SB_{curr}/SB_{curr_{F=0}}$) of albacore were moderate at ~37%. However, the SC noted that depletion levels of the exploitable biomass is estimated to be between 10% and 60%, depending on the fishery, having increased sharply in recent years. Current biomass is sufficient to support current levels of catch. However, for several years, the SC has noted that any increases in catch or effort are likely to lead to declines in catch rates in some regions, especially for longline catches of adult albacore, with associated impacts on vessel profitability.<br><br>The median estimate of *MSY* from the structural sensitivity analysis (99,085 t, 46,560 – 215,445) is comparable to the recent levels of (estimated) catch from the fishery (Hoyle *et al*., 2012).<br><br>The WCPFC, while noting that current catch levels from the South Pacific albacore stock appear to be sustainable, applied a capacity limit because of the uncertainty in the assessment and potential economic effects of a declining CPUE. The Conservation and Management Measure (CMM) for South Pacific Albacore (CMM-2010-05, replacing CMM-2005-02) adopted, in accordance with the Article 10 of the WCPFC Convention that: "Commission Members, Cooperating Non- Members, and participating Territories (CCMs) shall not increase the number of their fishing vessels actively fishing for South Pacific albacore in the Convention Area south of 20ºS above current (2005) levels or recent historical (2000-2004) levels." The CMM protects the legitimate rights and obligations of South Pacific states who may wish to pursue a responsible level of development of their fisheries for South Pacific albacore.<br><br>No new stock assessment and management advice was presented at SC9 in 2013 (WCPFC-SC 2013), hence the advice from SC8 stands. It was noted at WCPFC10 that the uncertainty in stock assessment is higher for the South Pacific albacore fishery than for the other major tuna species due to the nature of the fishery and the data available.<br><br>Some representatives at WCPFC10 expressed concern about the effectiveness of the existing CMM (CMM-2010-05) for South Pacific albacore in restricting increases in effort on the species. New Zealand, on behalf of some Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) members, presented a draft of a revised CMM for South Pacific albacore (WCPFC10 2013). Management of this fishery is considered critical to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) domestic longline industries and it was noted with concern that catches have doubled in the last decade despite the adoption of CMMs in 2005 and 2010 designed to limit entry. The proposed CMM included provisions to deter the continuing influx of vessels to albacore fishing grounds south of the equator, limits on catches in the high seas and overlap areas to 2006-2010 levels, and zone-based catch limits for CCMs which prevent growth in some fisheries but allow for it in others. This proposed CMM was not adopted. FFA members stated that South Pacific albacore is a mainstay for many of their domestic longline fisheries but it does not receive the attention it deserves within the WCPFC.<br><br>The results of the updated 2015 stock assessment will be important in relation to concerns over increasing catches and effort and future discussions on the need to strengthen management measures. |

**Total Allowable Catch (TAC) in most recent fishing year**

TACs are not set.

The total South Pacific catch in 2012 (89,258t) was a 24% increase over the 2011 catch and a 22% increase over the period 2007-11 (Harley and Williams, 2013). Longline catches (86,064t) increased 25% from 2011 and 22% on 2007-11. Troll and other method catches (3158t) were down 8% on 2011, but up 15% on 2007-11.

The total albacore catch in the New Zealand EEZ during the 2012-13 fishing year (i.e. 1 October 2012 – 30 September 2013), was 2994 t, of which 2727 t was taken by the MSC-certified client fishery, involving a total of 163 vessels (Table 1). A total of 257 t was caught as bycatch of the surface longline fisheries in New Zealand waters.

**Table 1 (source: Table 6 in WCPFC 2013a).** The total number of vessels that fished for albacore (troll and surface longline), and the total catch of albacore for the domestic troll, and domestic and charter surface longline fleets in New Zealand EEZ by calendar year. Small amounts (less than 4 t annually) were taken by other methods including pole and line, handline, and purse seine.

| | NZ troll vessels | | New Zealand longline vessels | | Charter longline vessels | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year | Catch (tonnes) | Vessel numbers | Catch (tonnes) | Vessel numbers | Catch (tonnes) | Vessel numbers |
| 2001 | 2736.3 | 326 | 2588.2 | 128 | 25.4 | 4 |
| 2002 | 3012.4 | 317 | 2536.9 | 147 | 7.9 | 4 |
| 2003 | 3721.2 | 283 | 2496.4 | 126 | 474.1 | 6 |
| 2004 | 3211.8 | 251 | 1232.3 | 95 | 16.0 | 4 |
| 2005 | 2808.8 | 213 | 604.4 | 55 | 29.7 | 2 |
| 2006 | 2043.4 | 178 | 479.8 | 53 | 16.4 | 3 |
| 2007 | 1735.8 | 136 | 313.7 | 38 | 42.8 | 6 |
| 2008 | 3352.3 | 168 | 372.7 | 31 | 9.8 | 4 |
| 2009 | 1793.6 | 166 | 409.5 | 36 | 12.0 | 4 |
| 2010 | 1832.5 | 133 | 457.7 | 40 | 1.8 | 4 |
| 2012 | 2786.6 | 162 | 417.7 | 38 | 1.5 | 4 |
| 2013 | 2727.3 | 163 | 264.0 | 39 | 2.9 | 4 |

**Unit of Certification share of TAC**

Not applicable, no TAC is set for this fishery in New Zealand waters or in the WCPFC area of jurisdiction.

**Client share of TAC**

Not applicable

**Green Weight[1] of catch taken by client group**

Most recent calendar year (2012-13): 2727 t taken by the troll fishery (approximately 91% of the total New Zealand albacore catch of 2994 t) (WCPFC 2013a).

Previous year (2011-12): Approximately 2787 t taken by troll fishery (approx. 87% of total New Zealand catch for that year of 3206 t).

[1] The weight of a catch prior to processing

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| **Condition 1** | Within four years of certification, target and limit reference points need to be agreed by WCPFC, consistent with the management objectives and scientific stock assessment.<br><br>Annual milestones in achieving this goal are:<br>**Year 1 (First surveillance audit)**<br>• Review current status of development of reference points for the stock.<br>• Promotion of adoption of appropriate target and limit reference points (or equivalents) within WCPFC should have begun in conjunction with Condition 2. This should include promotion of South Pacific Albacore as a priority species for the 2012 WCPFC Management Objectives Workshop.<br>**Year 2 (Second surveillance audit)**<br>• Adoption of the New Zealand Fishery Plan for albacore tuna and endorsement by the client.<br>• Evidence of engagement with other major countries fishing the southern albacore stock (i.e. Australia, French Polynesia, Japan, Korea, New Caledonia, Taiwan, United States of America and Samoa), seeking their support for the adoption of appropriate reference points for the stock in WCPFC.<br>• Promotion of the adoption of reference points as part of the Harvest Strategy within WCPFC, in conjunction with Condition 2.<br>**Year 3 (Third surveillance audit)**<br>• Evidence of successful implementation of the New Zealand Fishery Plan for albacore.<br>• Further promote the adoption of appropriate reference points as part of the Harvest Strategy, in conjunction with Condition 2. |
| **PI 1.1.2.** | **Reference Points:** Limit and target reference points are appropriate for the stock. |
| **SG 60** | Generic limit and target reference points are based on justifiable and reasonable practice appropriate for the species category. |
| **SG 80** | Reference points are appropriate for the stock and can be estimated.<br><br>The limit reference point is set above the level at which there is an appreciable risk of impairing reproductive capacity.<br><br>The target reference point is such that the stock is maintained at a level consistent with BMSY or some measure or surrogate with similar intent or outcome.<br><br>For low trophic level species, the target reference point takes into account the ecological role of the stock. |
| **SG 100** | Reference points are appropriate for the stock and can be estimated.<br><br>The limit reference point is set above the level at which there is an appreciable risk of impairing reproductive capacity following consideration of relevant precautionary issues.<br><br>The target reference point is such that the stock is maintained at a level consistent with BMSY or some measure or surrogate with similar intent or outcome, or a higher level, and takes into account relevant precautionary issues such as the ecological role of the stock with a high degree of certainty. |
| **Score** | **75** |

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| **Scoring Rationale** | Although management advice is given in relation to MSY reference points, there is no explicit limit or target points or regions defined. Explicit target and limit reference points (or regions) need to be defined meeting the MSC Principles and Criteria. In particular, a limit reference point is required which is set above the level at which there is an appreciable risk of impairing reproductive capacity.<br><br>This will need to be achieved for the overall stock through the regional fisheries management organisation. |
| **Client Action Plan** | **Year 1**<br>1. Engage with the New Zealand government to promote the completion and adoption of the Fishery Plan for albacore tuna.<br>2. Commission a review of current status of development of reference points for the southern albacore stock in WCP.<br>3. Consultation with Ministry of Fisheries, FFA members and NZ delegates to WCPFC with the objective of establishing an agreed position on reference points for the stock that is consistent with the MSC SG 80 standards.<br>4. Engage Ministry of Fisheries staff and New Zealand delegates to WCPFC to promote the following:<br>4.1. The tabling of a statement to WCPFC at its Eighth Session December 2011), urging other members to work diligently to adopt target and limit reference points for all tuna stocks, as required by the WCPFC Convention.<br>4.2. High-level contacts between New Zealand government officials and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock in advance of the Commission meeting to seek their support for the adoption of appropriate reference points by the WCPFC.<br>4.3. The southern albacore stock to be included as a priority species in the agenda for the WCPFC Management Objectives Workshop to be held in 2012.<br>5. Identify and initiate collaboration with other industry sectors and eNGOs in order to raise awareness of the need for WCPFC to adopt appropriate reference points for the southern albacore stock.<br>**Year 2**<br>1. Continue engagement with the New Zealand government to promote the completion and adoption of the Fishery Plan for albacore tuna.<br>2. Continue to promote consolidation of the New Zealand position on reference points for the southern albacore stock at subsequent WCPFC meetings and encourage delegates from the other major countries fishing the southern albacore stock to support the New Zealand position.<br>3. Maintain collaboration with other industry sectors and eNGOs in order to raise awareness of the need for WCPFC to adopt appropriate reference points for the southern albacore stock.<br>4. Contribute as required to the WCPFC 2012 Management Objectives Workshop with the objective of obtaining a recommendation from the Workshop for appropriate reference points for the stock that are consistent with SG 80 standards.<br>5. Canvas the major countries fishing for South Pacific albacore to seek their support for the adoption of appropriate reference points for the stock in WCPFC.<br>**Year 3**<br>1. Implementation of the New Zealand albacore tuna Fishery Plan<br>2. Contribute to the drafting of a Resolution for WCPFC to adopt appropriate reference points for the stock, to be tabled by NZ (and hopefully co-authored by most other countries fishing on the stock) at the 2013 WCPFC annual meeting for consideration by the Commission. |

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| **Client Progress** | See Clement and Associates, 2014 (attached) for the client summary of progress.<br><br>The client progress report indicates that the Tuna Management Association (TMA) continues to promote the adopt reference points by WCPFC through dialogue with the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) management unit of the New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). The TMA has been supportive of approaches taken by New Zealand towards achieving management objectives for albacore and for other tuna species in the WCP. An important approach undertaken by the New Zealand MPI is collaboration with Te Vaka Moana (TVM) and Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) countries towards achieving the adoption of reference points and catch limits within EEZs. In 2011, the TMA formally requested the Ministry's support in promoting the adoption of reference points and harvest control rules for albacore tuna for use in management of the WCP.<br><br>TMA has indicated its support of the HMS National Fisheries Plan and of the Operational Management Plan for albacore at previous surveillance audits. TMA maintains regular contact with the HMS management unit through regular attendance of HMS Working Group meetings where issues associated with albacore management needs and Industry's co-operation in the execution of the Albacore Operational Management Plan are discussed. As indicated in the client report for this audit, the HMS management unit is very actively engaged in a number of South Pacific regional management fora and promotes the albacore agenda strongly at these meetings. The client also indicates that:<br><br>• New Zealand has played a major role in preparing for the submission of a new CMM at WCPFC for southern albacore attempting to deliver limits on regional catches and has agreed to a catch limit for application within the NZ EEZ, an essential component of the revised CMM proposal (a WCPFC10 proposed CMM did not go ahead due to a lack of agreement on catch limits).<br><br>• TMA has established links with other MSC certified albacore fisheries with a view to collaborating towards the achievement of the required albacore management measures. TMA has been in dialogue with the Fiji Tuna Boat Owners Association (Charles Hufflett) and discussed issues and strategies around meeting the Conditions of Certification. TMA has also scheduled a meeting with representatives of the American Albacore Fisheries Association (AAFA) which has recently merged its MSC certificate with the Western Fish Boat Owners Association (WFOA).<br><br>• On behalf of the TMA, Rob Tilney attended a meeting "Aligning regional policy activities of WCPO longline FIPs and implementation of MSC Certification action plans" (agenda provided for Auditors' information), held on the margins of the 13th Infofish World Tuna Trade Conference & Exhibition in Bangkok, Thailand (21-23 May 2014). The objectives of the meeting were to "Identify opportunities for collaboration and alignment of regional policy activities through a formal or informal alliance of MSC client groups and FIP participants", with the aim of improving the WCPFC management system related to meeting albacore, yellowfin and bigeye tuna stock management objectives. The meeting was attended by MSC and FIP fishery representatives from USA, Japan, Cook Islands, Republic of Marshall Islands and Indonesia. Several representatives of eNGOs were also in attendance, including Conservation International, FishWise, Moore Foundation, Pew Environment Group, Sustainable Fisheries Partnership, Walton Family Foundation and World Wildlife Fund.<br><br>The client progress report provides information on a proposed sub-regional management structure for all tuna and billfish longline fisheries within EEZs, termed |

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| | the Tokelau Arrangement, with FFA members and small island developing states as potential signatories. This Arrangement aims to enhance the management of longline fishing and assist with implementation of management measures (including harvest strategies, harvest control rules, reference points, MCS etc.) and provide a basis for the adoption by WCPFC of compatible measures for High Seas areas. It is hoped that the Tokelau Arrangement will come into force in the coming year. Discussions related to the Management Scheme for the Tokelau Arrangement have included the development of a harvest strategy, TRPs and HCRs for albacore. One aspect of the draft Arrangement is agreement on a total allowable catch for South Pacific albacore as well as agreed annual catch level for parties to the agreement. |
| **Observations** | As indicated in the previous surveillance audits, New Zealand has adopted a National Fisheries Plan for Highly Migratory Species, as well as an Operational Management Plan for Albacore Tuna. The implementation of these plans is supported through annual operational plans. The TMA has indicated its support for these plans and in 2012 facilitated two feedback meetings for troll fishers to engage in discussion with the HMS management unit on the requirements and obligations of the Fisheries Plan and developments in the management of albacore tuna within the New Zealand EEZ and in the wider South Pacific region. The 2013/14 operational plan (MPI 2013a) highlights the implementation of conditions and recommendations associated with MSC certification in conjunction with industry as an issue for the HMS fisheries. The operational plan indicates that the current focus for MPI is working with neighbouring Pacific Island Countries (PICs) in the development of target and limit reference points for the southern albacore stock, and advocacy for adoption of these reference points within the wider WCPFC. For southern albacore tuna the MPI is working within FFA and TVM on the development of target and limit reference points that reflect economic as well as biological interests.<br><br>The 9th Regular session of the WCPFC (December 2012) adopted a biomass-based limit reference point for South Pacific albacore13 with the agreement that further work would be carried out by the Scientific Committee on F–based (i.e. fishing mortality-based) reference points. The biomass-based limit reference point adopted for South Pacific albacore is 20% $SB_{recent,\ F=0}$. (where $SB_{recent,\ F=0}$ is the estimated average spawning biomass over a recent period in the absence of fishing) (WCPFC-SC 2012). The operational plan indicates that New Zealand will continue to co-operate with other countries in the fishery to further refine limit reference points and to adopt an appropriate target reference point for the South Pacific albacore sock.<br><br>The development of target reference points by WCPFC for the major tuna species is ongoing. In the absence of a formally adopted TRP, WCPFC continues to manage tuna stocks against $B_{MSY}$, which therefore remains as the *de facto* target for South Pacific albacore.<br><br>WCPFC held a Management Objectives Workshop (MOW1) in late 2012, prior to the Commission meeting. The workshop developed a "Strawman" candidate list of fisheries management objectives, performance indicators and target indicators. The outputs of MOW1 were further developed by an expert group with support from the WCPFC Secretariat and Science Service Provider leading to a 2nd Management Objectives Workshop (MOW2) preceding the WCPFC Regular Meeting in Cairns, Australia, November 28-29, 2013. In that workshop a series of plenary workshop presentations showing examples of the application of target reference points, harvest control rules (HCRs) and trade-offs were provided, followed by break-out groups. A working paper (WCPFC-MOW 2013) examined potential target reference points using South Pacific albacore longlining as an example. This analysis examined potential future effort levels to produce maximum economic yield across the southern |

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| | longline fishery.<br><br>Plenary discussions on the final day drew together comments from the break-out groups via plenary discussions. A report of MOW2 was provided to WCPFC10 (WCPFC 2013c), including a recommendation for an initial spawning biomass target reference point for skipjack of $0.5SB_0$. This was not adopted by the Commission and a further workshop, MOW3 has been planned for the coming year with a view to informing the Commission's consideration and adoption of a TRP and HCR at WCPFC 11 The agreed work program for the expert group in the coming year is to:<br>i. Evaluate WCPO skipjack stock status against candidate target reference points of 40%, 50% and 60% of unfished spawning stock size.<br>ii. Apply stock-wide harvest control rules and examine robustness relative to the new assessment and major sources of uncertainty.<br>iii. Include performance indicators relating to fish sizes, impacts on yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna, and examine the acceptable magnitude of changes in fishing effort.<br><br>Rob Tilney provided an overview of the abovementioned meeting "Aligning regional policy activities of WCPO longline FIPs and implementation of MSC Certification action plans" held in Bangkok just prior to the surveillance audit and suggested it provided a useful opportunity to promote the need for progress with P1 requirements for South Pacific albacore. The establishment of a "WCPO Tuna MSC Principle 1 Alignment Group" was proposed with a role to disseminate information, and coordinate and align policy activities of relevant MSC client groups and participants of FIPs for albacore, bigeye and yellowfin tunas in the Convention Area of the WCPFC. It was agreed that communication by the group should continue into the future with the possibility of further side meetings at suitable fora. After the meeting, Mr Tilney proposed to prepare a letter for co-signature by the leads of relevant fisheries in the MSC program and FIPs to be sent to the WCPFC Secretariat requesting that management options (target reference point, harvest strategy, and harvest control rules) for South Pacific albacore be included on the agendas of the WCPFC's planned third Management Options Workshop and the 2014 Scientific Committee. |
| **Conclusion** | Satisfactory progress has been made against the Year 3 requirements for this condition. A major component of the client action plan has been the need for communication with other stakeholders to promote the adoption of reference points. There has been sufficient communication between the client and the MPI in the past 12 months to suggest that the implementation of reference points remains a priority and the adoption of a limit reference point for albacore by WCPFC shows progress. Ongoing participation by MPI in the processes to further develop reference points will be important, as will communication of progress with industry. The support by the client for Rob Tilney to participate in the Bangkok meeting promoting the need for progress with P1 requirements is clearly a positive and developments from this meeting should help with adoption of the necessary measures by WCPFC.<br><br>There continues to be limited engagement of the client with eNGOs. Unfortunately, eNGO representatives did not meet or provide input to the auditors at this annual audit. At previous audits, the client and WWF have indicated that although communication is limited there are no barriers to this occurring. The auditors note that eNGO representatives did participate in the recent Bangkok meeting.<br><br>The adoption of a limit reference point by WCPFC is a positive outcome and a work program has been established by WCPFC for the coming year for further development of reference points. However, future meeting of the condition will require continued emphasis on the further adoption and implementation of reference points by WCPFC |

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| | rather than ongoing delays pending further research. The focus at the next Management Objectives Workshop (MOW3) will be on skipjack tuna. The auditors support the client in seeking greater emphasis on albacore. FFA members stated at WCPFC10 that South Pacific albacore is a mainstay for many of their domestic longline fisheries but that it does not receive the attention it deserves within the WCPFC. As indicated above, there is concern over increasing South Pacific albacore catches and the level of effort targeting the species. FFA members have indicated the desire to introduce a revised CMM for albacore at WCPFC11 to strengthen management. |

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| **Condition 2** | Within four years of certification a well-defined harvest control rule needs to be proposed, tested and established by the scientific working group and management authority (primarily WCPFC).<br><br><u>Annual milestones in achieving this goal are:</u><br>**Year 1 (First surveillance audit)**<br>• Consultation between the client and Ministry of Fisheries HMS staff and WCPFC delegates regarding an agreed position on harvest control rules for the stock.<br>• Promotion of adoption of appropriate harvest control rules within WCPFC should have begun in conjunction with Condition 1. This should include promotion of South Pacific albacore tuna as a priority species for the 2012 WCPFC Management Objectives Workshop.<br>• NZ to lead (or co-lead) canvassing WCPFC members to support strengthening of HCRs.<br>**Year 2 (Second surveillance audit)**<br>• Adoption of the New Zealand Fishery Plan for albacore tuna and endorsement by the client.<br>• Further promote the adoption of formal harvest control rules at WCPFC. This should be undertaken in conjunction with any deliberations on appropriate reference points (Condition 1). Additional analyses should be included within the work plan of the WCPFC.<br>• Reporting should include the number of WCPFC members supporting revision of HCRs and activity to date. Commitment of other WCPFC members to achieving this goal should be achieved by this date.<br>**Year 3 (Third surveillance audit)**<br>• Evidence of successful implementation of the New Zealand Fishery Plan for albacore tuna.<br>• Further promote the adoption of formal harvest control rules at WCPFC. This should be undertaken in conjunction with deliberations on reference points (Condition 1).<br>• Evidence of contribution to drafting a Resolution for WCPFC to adopt appropriate harvest control rules for the southern albacore stock, to be tabled by New Zealand at the 2013 WCPFC annual meeting for consideration by the Commission, or at the latest, the 2014 meeting. |
| **PI 1.2.2** | **Harvest control rules and tools:** There are well defined and effective harvest control rules in place. |
| **SG 60** | Generally understood harvest control rules are in place that are consistent with the harvest strategy and which act to reduce the exploitation rate as limit reference points |

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| | are approached.<br>There is some evidence that tools used to implement harvest control rules are appropriate and effective in controlling exploitation. |
| **SG 80** | Well defined harvest control rules are in place that are consistent with the harvest strategy and ensure that the exploitation rate is reduced as limit reference points are approached.<br>The selection of the harvest control rules takes into account the main uncertainties.<br>Available evidence indicates that the tools in use are appropriate and effective in achieving the exploitation levels required under the harvest control rules. |
| **SG 100** | Well defined harvest control rules are in place that are consistent with the harvest strategy and ensure that the exploitation rate is reduced as limit reference points are approached.<br>The design of the harvest control rules take into account a wide range of uncertainties.<br>Evidence clearly shows that the tools in use are effective in achieving the exploitation levels required under the harvest control rules. |
| **Score** | **60** |
| **Scoring Rationale** | A well-defined harvest control rule needs to be adopted that is consistent with the harvest strategy and ensures that the exploitation rate is reduced as relevant reference points are approached (at present, management focuses on $B_{MSY}$ – the target reference point, but as Condition 1 requires a Limit Reference Point, this would also be included in harvest control rules). Although this is implied within the harvest strategy, it is not clear how, in practice, the fishery will achieve the target point (or region) within which management wishes to maintain the stock or that rebuilding will be achieved with the current tools. This will need to be achieved for the overall stock through the regional fisheries management organisation. |
| **Client Action Plan** | **Year 1**<br>1. Engage with the New Zealand government to promote the completion and adoption of the Fishery Plan for albacore tuna.<br>2. Consultation with the Ministry of Fisheries, FFA members and WCPFC delegates with the objective of establishing an agreed position on the adoption of harvest control rules for the stock. New Zealand to lead (or co-lead) canvassing WCPFC members to support adoption of harvest control rules.<br>• Engage Ministry of Fisheries staff and New Zealand delegates to WCPFC to promote the following:<br>• Table a statement to WCPFC at its Eighth Session (December 2011), urging other members to work diligently to adopt formal harvest control rules for all tuna stocks, as required by the WCPFC Convention.<br>• High-level contacts between New Zealand government officials and WCPFC delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock, in advance of the Commission meeting, to get their support for the adoption of appropriate harvest control rules by the WCPFC.<br>• Evidence that the New Zealand government will take a leading role in WCPFC in promoting the adoption of harvest control rules for the stock throughout the certification period.<br>• The southern albacore stock to be included as a priority species in the agenda for the WCPFC Management Objectives Workshop to be held in 2012.<br>3. Identify and initiate collaboration with other industry sectors and eNGOs in |

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| | order to raise awareness of the need for WCPFC to adopt appropriate harvest control rules for the southern albacore stock.<br>**Year 2**<br>1. Continued engagement with the New Zealand government to promote the completion and adoption of the Fishery Plan for albacore tuna.<br>2. Continue to promote consolidation of the New Zealand position on harvest control rules for the southern albacore stock at subsequent WCPFC meetings and workshops and encourage delegates from the other major countries fishing the stock to support the New Zealand position. This shall be undertaken in conjunction with any deliberations on appropriate reference points.<br>3. Contribute as required to WCPFC 2012 Management Objectives Workshop with the objective of obtaining a recommendation from the Workshop for appropriate harvest control rules for the stock that are consistent with SG 80 standards.<br>4. Maintain collaboration with other industry sectors and eNGOs in order to raise awareness of the need for WCPFC to adopt well-defined harvest control rules for the southern albacore stock.<br>**Year 3**<br>1. Implementation of the New Zealand albacore tuna Fishery Plan and endorsement by the client.<br>2. Contribute as required to WCPFC meetings and workshops with the objective of achieving the adoption of harvest control rules for the southern albacore stock by WCPFC.<br>3. Canvas the major countries fishing for South Pacific albacore to seek their support for the adoption of well-defined harvest control rules for the stock in WCPFC.<br>4. Contribute to the drafting of a Resolution for WCPFC to adopt well-defined harvest control rules for the stock, to be tabled by New Zealand (and hopefully co-authored by most other countries fishing on the stock) at the 2013 (or 2014 if necessary) WCPFC annual meeting for consideration by the Commission. |
| **Client Progress** | See Clements and Associates, 2014 (attached) for the client summary of progress.<br><br>The Condition on Harvest Control Rules mirrors the Condition for Reference Points and the actions required for this Condition reflect those for Condition 1. For this reason, much of the progress is reflected in the responses to Condition 1 above. TMA's correspondence with the Ministry has requested their support and assistance in advancing both of these Conditions.<br><br>The New Zealand Government has continued to work with other Pacific nations, predominantly through FFA and Te Vaka Moana, to support the adoption of zone-based catch limits.<br><br>As indicated under Condition 1:<br><br>• New Zealand has adopted a National Fisheries Plan for Highly Migratory Species, as well as an Operational Management Plan for Albacore Tuna. The implementation of these plans is supported through annual operational plans and the client has shown its support for these plans.<br><br>• The New Zealand Government has continued to support the development of regional measures for albacore and supported the tabling of a CMM at the 2013 WCPFC Commission meeting to develop regional catch limits (the CMM was not adopted).<br><br>In addition, the client progress report provides information on a proposed sub-regional management structure for all tuna and billfish longline fisheries within EEZs, termed the Tokelau Arrangement, with FFA members and SIDS as potential signatories. This Arrangement aims to enhance the management of longline fishing and assist with |

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| | implementation of management measures (including harvest strategies, harvest control rules, reference points, MCS etc.) and provide a basis for the adoption by WCPFC of compatible measures for High Seas areas. It is hoped that the Tokelau Arrangement will come into force in the coming year. Discussions related to the Arrangement have already developed a harvest strategy and harvest control rules for South Pacific albacore, which could be adopted in the short-term by participating FFA members. One aspect of the draft Arrangement is agreement on a total allowable catch for South Pacific albacore as well as agreed annual catch level for parties to the agreement. |
| **Observations** | The observations at Condition 1 also apply here. The harvest strategy for WCPO albacore has several components, with WCPFC, national and archipelagic management actions, supported by a robust stock assessment and extensive monitoring frameworks, but it does not include formal harvest control rules.<br><br>FFA has promoted stronger regional management of South Pacific albacore and sought the adoption of zone-based catch limits on behalf of FFA members. A paper providing background information on the introduction of harvest control rules was presented at SC8 (Berger *et al*., 2012) and a presentation was made at the management objectives workshop on developing harvest control rules for skipjack tuna (SPC-OFP, 2012).<br><br>New Zealand, on behalf of some FFA members, presented a draft of a revised CMM for South Pacific albacore (WCPFC10 2013). Catches have continued to increase despite the adoption of CMMs in 2005 and 2010 designed to limit entry. The proposed CMM included provisions to deter the continuing influx of vessels to albacore fishing grounds south of the equator, limits on catches in the high seas and overlap areas to 2006-2010 levels, and zone-based catch limits for CCMs which prevent growth in some fisheries but allow for it in others. This would have gone some way to providing a more integrated harvest strategy. The WCPFC10 summary report (WCPFC 2013b) suggests that further attempts to introduce a revised CMM are likely at WCPFC11 and developments with the proposed Tokelau Arrangement are likely to help with this.<br><br>WCPFC has supported a work plan for the coming year that includes further development of management objectives and target reference points, leading to a 3rd Management Objectives Workshop in 2014. The pursuit of mechanisms for the introduction of catch limits and the adoption of a coordinated and comprehensive approach to the management of tuna across the region are commendable goals. However, this should not exclude the pursuit of well-defined harvest controls as required by this Condition. The agreed work program for the expert group in the coming year is to:<br>i. Evaluate WCPO skipjack stock status against candidate target reference points of 40%, 50% and 60% of unfished spawning stock size.<br>ii. Apply stock-wide harvest control rules and examine robustness relative to the new assessment and major sources of uncertainty.<br>iii. Include performance indicators relating to fish sizes, impacts on yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna, and examine the acceptable magnitude of changes in fishing effort.<br>The recent meeting "Aligning regional policy activities of WCPO longline FIPs and implementation of MSC Certification action plans" held in Bangkok just prior to the surveillance audit is a positive step in raising the focus on the need for action to address MSC P1 needs for certified tuna fisheries. The establishment of a "WCPO Tuna MSC Principle 1 Alignment Group" was proposed with a role to disseminate information, and coordinate and align policy activities of relevant MSC client groups and participants of FIPs for albacore, bigeye and yellowfin tunas in the Convention Area of the WCPFC. It was agreed that communication by the group should continue |

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| | into the future with the possibility of further side meetings at suitable fora. TMA lent support to this meeting with the participation of Rob Tilney. Subsequent to the meeting, Mr Tilney has proposed the possibility of preparing a letter for co-signature by the leads of relevant fisheries in the MSC program and FIPs to be sent to the WCPFC Secretariat requesting that management options (target reference point, harvest strategy, and harvest control rules) for South Pacific albacore be included on the agendas of the WCPFC's planned third Management Options Workshop and the 2014 Scientific Committee.<br><br>Significant efforts have been undertaken to develop the South Pacific albacore harvest strategy through the FFA Sub-Committee on South Pacific Tuna and Billfish Fisheries (SC-SPTBF). At its recent meeting (6-7 May 2014) there was discussion of the current state of the albacore harvest strategy and options for finalizing a zone-based sub-regional arrangement. Harvest control rules have been developed by FFA members under the auspices of the SC-SPTFB for implementation within individual EEZs (SCSPTBF16, 2014c). The meeting introduced a draft new sub-regional management structure for all tuna and billfish longline fisheries within EEZs, termed the Tokelau Arrangement, which aims to implement within-EEZ management measures (i.e. harvest strategies, harvest control rules, reference points, MCS etc.) for South Pacific fisheries, and provide a basis for the adoption by WCPFC of compatible measures for High Seas areas (FFC89 2014). Although the proposed Tokelau Arrangement relates to longline fishing, it has the potential to progress the adoption of reference points and harvest control rules for South Pacific albacore across the region and hence have beneficial outcomes for the client fishery. |
| **Conclusion** | Progress against Year 3 requirements for this condition has been satisfactory. The conclusions for Condition 1 above are equally applicable here. As reported at the previous surveillance audit, there has been further progress with the introduction of reference points by WCPFC than is the case for harvest control rules. There is not strong evidence that there will be formal adoption of harvest control rules in the short term. The requirement for the adoption of Harvest Control Rules by the Commission needs to be pursued more strongly, along with other approaches that are being undertaken. Current progress suggests that meeting this condition according to the defined schedule will be difficult.<br><br>The support by the client for Rob Tilney to participate in the Bangkok meeting promoting the need for progress with P1 requirements is clearly a positive and developments from this meeting should help with adoption of the necessary measures by WCPFC. Similarly, the development of a potential harvest strategy through FFA SC-SPTBF and the proposed Tokelau Arrangement are signs that progress is being made. |

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| **Condition 3** | Within two years of Certification, short and long term objectives for the New Zealand albacore fishery, relating to the stock and all the relevant ecosystem components, need to be agreed by stakeholders. The fisheries plan should be finalized and evidence of implementation provided. |
| **PI** | **Fishery- specific objectives PI 3.2.1**<br><br>The fishery has clear, specific objectives designed to achieve the outcomes expressed by MSC's Principles 1 and 2. |

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| **Conclusion** | It was determined at the 1st surveillance audit that this condition has been satisfied and the PI meets SG100.<br><br>The New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries produces annual operational plans for highly migratory species and reports progress against key focus areas for the fishery (MPI 2013a). |

In addition to the three conditions for certification three recommendations were made by the IMM assessment team. The 3rd recommendation related to the implementation of the National Plan of Action for Sharks and was closed at the 1st surveillance audit.

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| **Recommendation 1 & 2** | **PI 2.1.1, *Status:*** The fishery does not pose a risk of serious or irreversible harm to the retained species and does not hinder recovery of depleted retained species<br><br>**PI 2.1.3; *Information / monitoring:*** Information on the nature and extent of retained species is adequate to determine the risk posed by the fishery and the effectiveness of the strategy to manage retained species.<br><br>**PI 2.2.3 *Information / monitoring***<br>Information on the nature and amount of bycatch is adequate to determine the risk posed by the fishery and the effectiveness of the strategy to manage bycatch.<br><br>**PI 2.3.3 *Information / monitoring***<br>Relevant information is collected to support the management of fishery impacts on ETP species, including:<br>- information for the development of the management strategy;<br>- information to assess the effectiveness of the management strategy; and<br>- information to determine the outcome status of ETP species. |
| **Client Action** | Collect sufficient data to adequately differentiate the Ray's bream catches in this (and other fisheries) into their component species within the fishery.<br><br>Evaluate the need and utility of increased observer coverage to meet management goals in this fleet and then to ensure delivery of that resource. These should include, but not be limited to, ensuring that the observer coverage of the albacore tuna troll fishery is maintained at a level that is adequate to:<br>• Define by-catch levels so as to enable the prevention of overexploitation of by- catch species, especially for those species most at risk<br>• Provide information to fully understand interactions with all ETP species.<br><br>Actions for implementation:<br>1. Support the level of observer coverage proposed by the New Zealand HMS Fishery Plan and the operational objectives for albacore tuna.<br>2. Communicate directly with all New Zealand tuna troll vessels regarding the need for accurate record-keeping and reporting of ETP species catches to the Ministry (reporting of by-catch by species on catch returns, and furnishing of Non-Fish / Protected Species Catch Returns). Suggest an information booklet be prepared for distribution to all vessels via buying stations (i.e. Licenced Fish Receivers). |
| **Client Progress** | In 2012, TMA distributed information to Licenced Fish Receivers, for distribution to vessels, pertaining to the need for improved identification of retained bycatch species and the need to implement the NPOA sharks (Clement and Associates |

2013).

Observer data:
TMA has also supported the level of observer coverage recommended by the Operational Management Plan. Observer coverage in the albacore troll fishery has historically been low. The observer coverage of the troll fleet has been ongoing since 2006–07 and coverage has averaged 0.7% of the effort during that time (MPI 2013b). No protected species have been observed as bycatch in this fishery. A higher level of monitoring is undertaken onshore in a shed processing sampling programme that has sampled on average 4.1% of the fishing effort. Ray's bream make up the bulk of the bycatch with minor catches of skipjack tuna, barracouta and kahawai (Table 2 below; MPI 2013b). No observer coverage was scheduled for the 2013-14 season (MPI 2013a).

Bycatch:
Data from the MPI Observer Programme in the table below illustrate the low bycatch rate in the fishery, in particular, the very low number of sharks caught.

| Species | Number of fish caught | | | | | |
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| **Common name** | **2006-07** | **2007-08** | **2008-09** | **2009-10** | **2010-11** | **2011-12** |
| Albacore tuna | 1,684 | 1,776 | 1,755 | 5,403 | 4,913 | 2,772 |
| Ray's bream | | 18 | 12 | 537 | 35 | 7 |
| Skipjack tuna | 1 | 2 | 26 | 20 | 359 | 2 |
| Barracouta | | | 1 | | 126 | 13 |
| Kahawai | | | 6 | | 5 | 14 |
| Kingfish | | | 2 | 4 | 4 | |
| Dolphinfish | | | | 1 | | |
| Mako shark | | | | | | 1 |
| Unidentified | 2 | | | 174 | | |
| **% Albacore in catch** | **99.8%** | **98.9%** | **97.4%** | **88.0%** | **90.3%** | **98.7%** |

**Table 2 (source: Table 8 in MPI 2013b).** Observed species composition of the albacore troll fishery. Number of fish recorded in the observer programme from 2006–07 to 2011–12.

**Observations**

At the 2nd surveillance audit the audit team were given a copy of the information sent to vessel operators (NZ TMA, 2012).

We consider that this provides operators with enough information to adequately differentiate the Ray's bream catches into their component species and to report correctly. The client indicated that there had been some initial confusion over the reporting of Ray's bream following the distribution of the identification sheets but that this had been resolved.

The annual operational plan includes a management action to deliver albacore observer coverage levels required to meet MSC certification requirements. The client has supported the level of observer coverage as proposed by the Ministry of Fisheries operational plan; however this coverage is still at a low overall percentage and no observer coverage was planned for the 2013/14 season. It is recommended that the industry continue to support increased coverage.

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| **Conclusion** | The client to continue to support increased observer coverage. Communication with the operators in the fishery has been sufficient to convey the requirements of MSC certification. |

| **Any complaints against the certified operation; recorded, reviewed and actioned.** |
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| No complaints were reported to the audit team. |

| **Any relevant changes to legislation or regulation.** |
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| No changes were reported to the audit team. |

| **Any relevant changes to management regime.** |
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| There have been no substantive changes to the WCPFC management regime for southern albacore. However, as indicated in the client submission to the audit and elsewhere in this report, work has progressed on several fronts towards the development of an improved management regime. |

| **Overall Conclusions.** |
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| Satisfactory progress has been made on the Conditions of certification and recommendations.<br><br>Condition 1 is considered to be on target and will be reassessed at the next annual surveillance.<br><br>Condition 2 is considered to be on target and will be reassessed at the next annual surveillance.<br><br>However, whilst there has been substantial work to develop reference point and harvest control rules, their formal adoption by the Commission needs to be pursued more strongly. Current progress suggests that meeting the conditions according to the defined schedule will be difficult<br><br>Condition 3 was closed following the Year 1 surveillance audit.<br><br>No changes in management have taken place that would detrimentally affect the performance of this fishery against the MSC standard and the fishery continues to meet the requirements of the MSC Standard. No destructive fishing practices or controversial unilateral exemptions to an international agreement have been introduced.<br><br>MSC Certification should therefore continue with annual audits in accordance with the surveillance schedule set out in Annex 3 of this report. |

**Annex 1**

No written stakeholder submissions were provided.

The client submitted the following update report.

| 1. Stock Status and Catch Data | |
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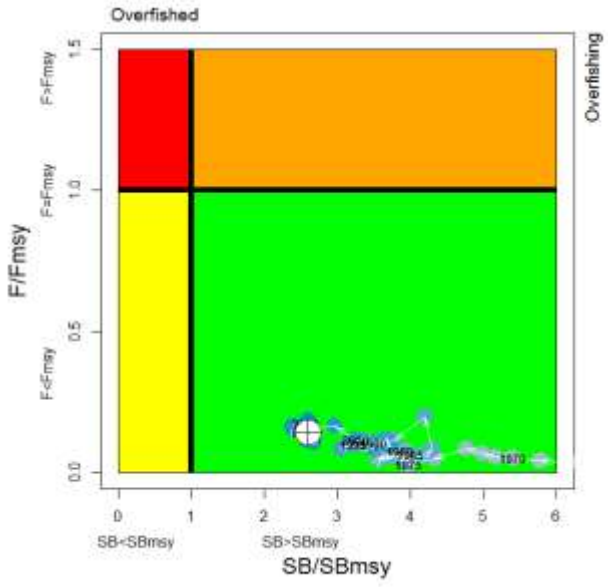
| **Update on Stock Status** | The most recent stock assessment for the southern Pacific albacore stock was conducted in 2012 (WCPFC-SC8, 2012), as was reported in the Client Update Report for the 2nd surveillance audit in May 2013. The next stock assessment is scheduled for 2015. The key outcomes from the 2012 assessment were:<br>• Estimated stock status was similar to those from the 2009 and 2011 assessments<br>• There is a high probability that the stock size is above the target of $B_{MSY}$ and the stock is consequently not in an overfished state, as illustrated in the 'snail-trail' plot of annual stock status relative to $SB_{MSY}$ and $F_{MSY}$ (Fig. 1). $B_{MSY}$ for the stock is estimated to occur at 53% $B_0$, while $SB_{MSY}$ is estimated at 26% $SB_0$<br>• Catches are rapidly approaching the median estimate of MSY.<br>• Current levels of catch are not affecting the spawning output of the population<br>• The South Pacific stock is not considered to be overfished and nor is overfishing occurring<br>• The assessment model is very sensitive to growth-rate estimates and, as area-related and sex-related variations in growth rates are not included, the resultant outputs from the model remain uncertain.<br>  <br><br>**Figure 1:** Trend in annual stock status, relative to $SB_{MSY}$ (x-axis) and $F_{MSY}$ (y-axis) reference points, for the period 1960-2010. The colour of the points is graduated from pale blue (1960) to blue (2009) and white cross (2010), and points are labelled at five-year intervals. The last year of the model (2011) is excluded because it is highly uncertain).<br><br>There have been large increases in southern albacore catches post-2008 and they are now at historically high levels. The average catch for the period 2009-2012 was approximately 32% higher than for the period 2001-2008 (Fig. 2), (SC-SPTBF16, 2014). |

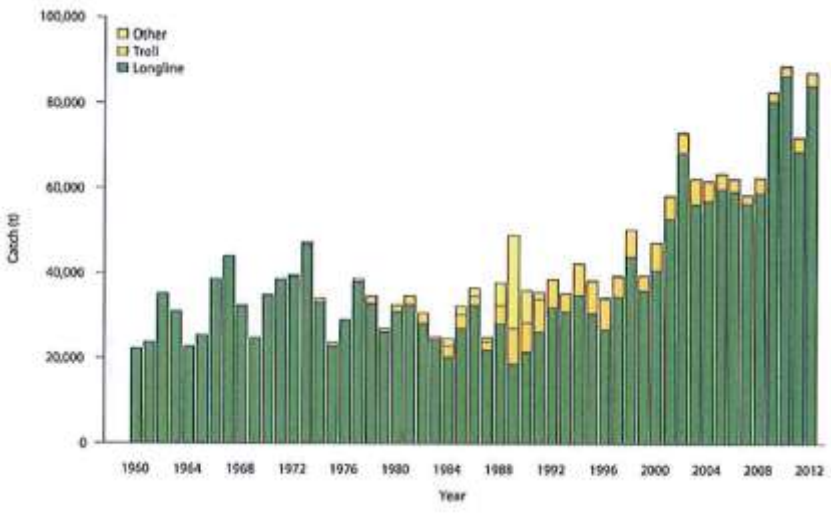



**Figure 2:** Total annual catch (t) of south Pacific albacore by fishing method (1960 – 2012).

However, as most of the albacore catch is taken by longliners, which target the larger and older fish, there is a substantial component of the stock that is essentially untouched by the fishery, which is good for the stock (Fig. 3), (SC-SPTBF16, 2014).

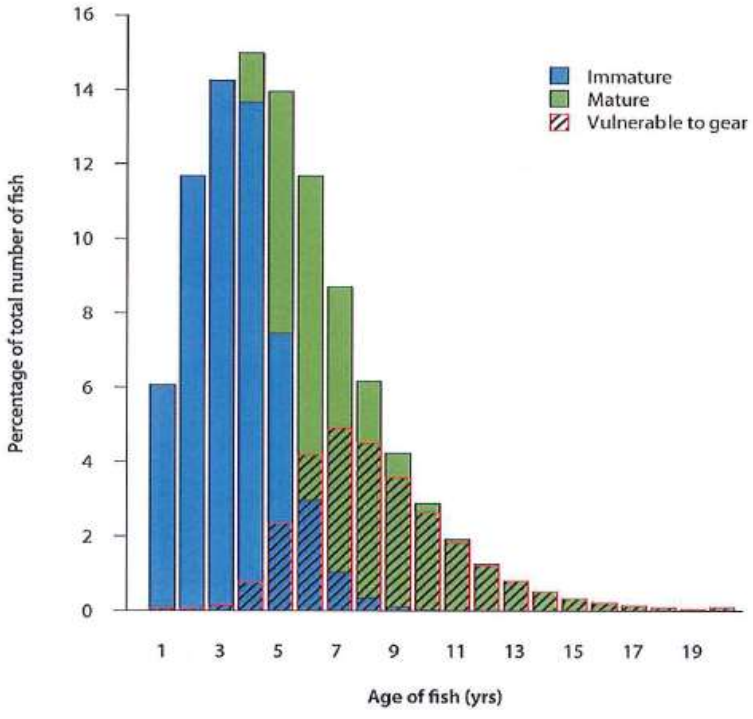



**Figure 3:** Percentage of albacore vulnerable to longline gear by age compared to the percentage of immature and mature fish).

| | |
|---|---|
| **Total catch in most recent fishing year (certified and non-certified)** | The total South Pacific albacore catch in the WCPFC area of jurisdiction during 2012 was 132,349 t, 6,446 t more than in 2011 (WCPFC, 2013).<br>The total albacore catch in the New Zealand EEZ during the 2012-13 fishing year (i.e. 1 October 2012 – 30 September 2013), was 2,994 t, of which 2,727 t was taken by the MSC-certified client fishery, involving a total of 163 vessels (WCPFC, 2013). A total of 257 t was caught by the surface longline fisheries in New Zealand waters, almost entirely as by-catch in the southern bluefin, bigeye and swordfish targeted fisheries.<br>The 2014 albacore season was a poor one with an unconfirmed catch of around 1,900 t. |
| **Certified fishery share of total catch** | The certified fishery share of the total New Zealand albacore catch was 91%. |
| **Client group allocation of TAC** | N/A. No TAC is set for this fishery in New Zealand or in the WCPFC area of jurisdiction. |
| **Total catch of client group** | Approximately 91% of the total albacore catch of 2,994 t in New Zealand waters, i.e. 2,727 t. |
| **Green Weight[2] of catch taken by client group** | Most recent calendar year (2012-13): 2,727 t<br>Previous year (2011-12): 2,798 t |

| **2. Any complaints against the certified operation; recorded, reviewed and actioned.** |
|---|
| Nil |

| **3. Any relevant changes to legislation or regulation.** |
|---|
| Nil |

| **4. A management regime.** |
|---|
| There have been no substantive changes to the WCPFC management regime for southern albacore. However, work has progressed on several fronts towards the development of an improved management regime, including:<br>• Ongoing development of target reference points (TRPs). The August 2013 meeting of the WCPFC Scientific Committee (SC9) recommended that the second Management Objectives Workshop (MOW2) should include an exploration of options, and ranges of values, for TRPs for southern albacore (WCPFC-SC9, 2013). As it turned out, MOW2 considered these for the southern longline fishery as a whole, of which albacore is the largest single component, contributing 46% of the catch. Candidate TRPs were explored for biological, economic and social objectives respectively. In considering the biological objective it was considered that while a TRP has yet to be decided, the adoption of a harvest control rule (HCR) that provides a high probability of not exceeding the LRP for biomass may be sufficient to ensure that the average biomass matches a suitable TRP. While the |

[2] The weight of a catch prior to processing

LRP for albacore is 20% $SB_{recent, F=0}$ and $SB_{MSY}$ is estimated to be 23% $SB_0$, there is a desire amongst FFA member countries to set a TRP at a level higher than $B_{MSY}$, preferably at $B_{MEY}$. This is because a biology-based target such as MSY does not account for the economies of the albacore fishery, which has experienced recent declines in CPUE, and a TRP set at $B_{MSY}$ is unlikely to support an economically viable longline fishery (SC-SBTBF16, 2014a).

Discussions at SC-SPTBF16, held in May 2014, suggested that in order to reach consensus agreement on the implementation of a TRP it may be necessary to start with at $B_{MSY}$ and then work towards raising it towards $B_{MEY}$ over time. The SC-SPTBF16 noted, however, that the aggregate of the aspirational catch limits of FFA member countries exceeds the MSY for the stock and there is a need to reduce these if the goal of achieving economic objectives for the fishery is to be realised (SC-SPTBF16, 2014b).

- Harvest control rules have been developed by FFA members under the auspices of the SC-SPTFB for implementation within individual EEZs and with reporting to, and monitoring by, the SC-SPTBF (SC-SPTBF16, 2014c).

- Sub-regional management structure for tuna longline fisheries. The SC-SPTBF16 meeting introduced a draft new sub-regional management structure for all tuna and billfish longline fisheries within EEZs, termed the Tokelau Arrangement, which aims to implement within-EEZ management measures (i.e. harvest strategies, harvest control rules, reference points, MCS etc.) for south Pacific fisheries, and as a basis for the adoption by WCPFC of compatible measures for High Seas areas (FFC89, 2014). Concern was expressed by some FFA member countries that this initiative will stall the southern albacore harvest strategy initiative.

- Work has also been ongoing on a revised Conservation and Management Measure (CMM2013-XX rev3) for effort control in the southern albacore fishery in light of the ineffectiveness of the existing measure, CMM 2010-05, in combatting effort expansion, and the resultant decline in CPUE for adult fish in the albacore longline fishery. The proposal, tabled at WCPFC10 by FFA members (WCPFC10, 2013a), met with strong opposition from China and other DWFNs on the basis that the science advice indicates the species is being fished at sustainable levels, and was not accepted by the Commission (SC-SPTBF16, 2014d). The revised CMM proposed the following:
    - Revision of the area of application from south of $20^0$S to the area south of the equator
    - Implementation of EEZ catch limits equal to or less than the highest historical catches
    - Implementation of limits for CCMs fishing in High Seas pockets based on their average catches during the period 2006-10.

  A further revision of this CMM will be tabled by FFA members at WCPFC11 in December 2014.

**References:**

FFC89 (2014). Tokelau Arrangement for the management of the south Pacific longline fishery – management scheme (longline harvest scheme). Draft, adopted by FFC89, 4 July 2014.

SC-SPTBF16 (2014). Stock take of the South Pacific albacore fishery. SC-SPTBF16/IP.2 (Supp.)

SC-SPTBF16 (2014a). Current state of the SP ALB fishery. SC-SPTBF16/Officials/IP.2.

SC-SPTBF16 (2014b). Record of proceedings. Sub-Committee on South Pacific Tuna and Billfish Fisheries. Sixteenth Meeting of Officials, Apia, Samoa. 6-7 May 2014.

SC-SPTBF16 (2014c). Current state of the Harvest Strategy for the South Pacific Fishery. SC-SPTBF16/Officials/IP.3.

SC-SPTBF16 (2014d). National implementation of the SP-ALB harvest Strategy. SC-SPTBF16/Officials/IP.5.

WCPFC (2013). Tuna Fishery Yearbook 2012. Oceanic Fisheries Programme Secretariat of the

Pacific Community, Noumea, New Caledonia. Version 1.0, 8th November 2013.

WCPFC10 (2013). New Zealand. Annual Report to the Commission. Part 1: Information on fisheries, research, and statistics. WPCFC-SC-AR/CCM-15

WCPFC10 (2013a). Conservation and management measure for south Pacific albacore. CMM 2013-XX rev3. WCPFC10-2013-DP34 SP ALB CMM Rev3.

WCPFC10 (2013b). Report of the second management objectives workshop. Proposed future work plan for advancing the development of a management framework for the WCPFC. WCPFC10-2013-15a

WCPFC-SC8 (2012). Stock assessment of albacore tuna in the South Pacific Ocean. WCPFC-SC8-2012/SA-WP-04-Rev1.

WCPFC-SC9 (2013). Summary of SC input to the management objectives process. WCPFC-SC9 Attachment G.

| **Condition No.** | 1. **Within four years of certification, target and limit reference points need to be agreed by WCPFC, consistent with the management objectives and scientific stock assessment.** |
|---|---|
| **Client Progress** | TMA remains actively engaged with MPI through regular attendance of HMS Working Group meetings where issues associated with albacore management needs and Industry's co-operation in the execution of the Albacore Operational Management Plan are discussed. The HMS management unit in turn is very actively engaged in a number of south Pacific regional management fora and promotes the albacore agenda strongly at these meetings. New Zealand has been one of the main drivers behind the development of a new CMM for southern albacore and has also agreed to a catch limit for application within the NZ EEZ, an essential component of the revised CMM proposal.<br><br>TMA has also established links with other MSC certified albacore fisheries with a view to collaborating towards the achievement of the required albacore management measures. TMA has scheduled a meeting with Natalie Webster, Operations Manager for the American Albacore Fisheries Association (AAFA) to progress this initiative. As the AAFA has recently merged its MSC certificate with the Western Fish Boat Owners Association (WFOA), TMA will have direct links with both of these Associations. TMA has also been in dialogue with the Fiji Tuna Boat Owners Association (Charles Hufflett) and has discussed issues and strategies around meeting the Conditions of Certification.<br><br>TMA will attend a meeting "Aligning regional policy activities of WCPO longline FIPs and implementation of MSC Certification action plans" (agenda provided for Auditors' information), to be held on the margins of the 13th Infofish World Tuna Trade Conference & Exhibition in Bangkok, Thailand (21-23 May 2014). The objectives of the meeting are to "Identify opportunities for collaboration and alignment of regional policy activities through a formal or informal alliance of MSC client groups and FIP participants", with the aim of improving the WCPFC management system related to meeting albacore, yellowfin and bigeye tuna stock management objectives.' The meeting will be attended by around nine MSC and FIP fishery representatives from USA, Japan, Cook Islands, Republic of Marshall Islands and Indonesia. Several eNGOs will also be in attendance, including Conservation International, FishWise, Moore Foundation, Pew Environment Group, Sustainable Fisheries Partnership, Walton Family Foundation and World Wildlife Fund. An MSC representative (Bill Holden) will also participate.<br><br>The Bangkok meeting will also provide an opportunity for lobbying some of the DWFNs on the need for improved albacore management measures to be adopted by WCPFC. In particular, discussions will be sought with conference delegates from China and Chinese Taipei. Interestingly, the Bangkok meeting has been arranged by a consultant to the Luen Thai Fishing Venture, a Chinese company which owns and/or controls well over a hundred tuna longliners. It remains to be seen whether this marks a turning point in the *modus operandi* of Chinese vessels in the Pacific. The Chinese delegation at WCPFC10 objected to the proposal for a revised effort management CMM on the basis that the southern albacore stock is being sustainably harvested (i.e. is above $B_{MSY}$), and that no further management measures (i.e. TRP, HCRs, catch and effort limits) are required. This shortsighted and self-serving approach is damaging to the economic viability of the fisheries in the region, particularly those of SIDS. The word in the industry is that because of declining albacore CPUE, even the subsidised Chinese longliners are beginning to have difficulty operating profitably.<br><br>As outlined in Section 4 above, work is progressing apace towards the development |

| | |
|---|---|
| | of target reference points and harvest control rules for southern albacore for consideration and adoption by WCPFC. The proposed new sub-regional organisation, the Tokelau Arrangement, has already developed a harvest strategy and harvest control rules for southern albacore, which could be adopted in the short-term by participating FFA members. In terms of the draft Agreement, those who have not agreed to the harvest strategy would be free to sign up to the Agreement at a later date. |
| **Supporting Evidence** | In addition to the documents listed in Section 4 above:<br>1. Agenda – Aligning MSC Principle 1 Activities of FIP and MSC Client Action Plans for Fisheries for Albacore, Bigeye and Yellowfin Tunas in the WCPFC Convention Area<br>2. Email correspondence with Eric Gilman, Luen Thai and University of Hawaii<br>3. Summary of regional activities, NZ albacore troll fishery Client Action Plan<br>4. Email correspondence with Arthur Hore, MPI<br>5. Email correspondence with Natalie Webster, AAFA<br>6. Email correspondence with Bill Holden, MSC<br>7. Email correspondence with Doug Loder<br>8. Statements to WCPFC10 by Greenpeace, ISSF, PEW and WWF |
| **Condition No.** | 2. **Within four years of certification a well-defined harvest control rule needs to be proposed, tested and established by the scientific working group and management authority (primarily WCPFC).** |
| **Client Progress** | As for Condition 1 above. |
| **Supporting Evidence** | As for Condition 1 above. |

**Annex 2 - Notification of surveillance audit**

# Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Fishery Certification Assessment
# NZ Albacore Troll Fishery
# Certification Body: Intertek Fisheries Certification

## Surveillance Audit

Following certification of this fishery, we are now continuing the process of annual surveillance audits of the fishery. These audits have two principal functions:

1. To review any changes in the management of the fishery, including regulations, key management or scientific staff, or stock evaluation
2. To evaluate the progress of the fishery against any Conditions of Certification raised during the Full Assessment

During the audit, or at separate meetings, we shall be speaking with representatives of the fishery and fishery management organisations. We expect to carry out meetings between the **28th and 30th May 2014.**

Meetings will be held in Wellington and attended by the following Audit Team members

| | |
|---|---|
| **Jo Akroyd** | **Coordinator / L/A** |
| **Kevin McLoughlin** | **Specialist Team Member** |

(see details of the team membership below)**.**

Should you have any information on this fishery that you feel should be considered in the assessment, please advise us. We may be available to meet with stakeholders as appropriate. If you would like to arrange a meeting, please advise us of:

a) your name and contact details
b) your association with the fishery
c) the issues you would like to discuss (in order for us to arrange appropriate representation)
d) where and when you would like to meet

Lead Assessor : Jo Akroyd
E-mail: jakroyd@xtra.co.nz
5th May 2014

**Audit Team Members:**

**Jo Akroyd.** Lead Assessor and Principle 3 Advisor
Jo is a fisheries management and marine ecosystem consultant with extensive international and Pacific experience. She has worked at senior levels in both the public and private sector as a fisheries manager and marine policy expert. Jo was with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in New Zealand for 20 years. Starting as a fisheries scientist, she was promoted to senior chief fisheries scientist, then Fisheries Management Officer, and the Assistant Director, Marine Research. She was awarded a Commemoration Medal in 1990 in recognition of her pioneering work in establishing New Zealand's fisheries quota management system. Among her current contracted activities, she is involved internationally in fishery certification of offshore, inshore and shellfish fisheries as Fisheries Management Specialist and Lead Assessor for the Intertek Moody Marine audit team. She has carried out the Marine Stewardship Councils' (MSC) certification assessment for sustainable fisheries. Examples include NZ (hoki, southern blue whiting, albacore, scallops), Fiji (longline albacore) Japan (pole and line tuna, flatfish, snowcrab, scallops), China (scallops) Antarctica (Ross sea tooth fishery).

**Kevin McLoughlin**: Principle 1 and Principle 2 Advisor
Kevin is a specialist fisheries consultant who previously worked with the Australian Bureau of Rural Sciences as a Senior Fisheries Scientist engaged in a wide range of international and domestic fisheries issues, with close links to Government policy. Responsibilities included production of BRS Fishery Status Reports which have had a major influence on the direction of Australia's fisheries management and policy. Responsibilities required a high level of interaction with policy and industry clients, and with international organizations. He represented BRS on many committees and groups such as the Australian Fisheries Management Authority's fishery assessment groups (including southern shark, scallop, northern prawn, western tuna), the Australian Shark Implementation Group for the National Plan of Action for Sharks and others. From 2005 to 2008 he was Chair of the Department of Environment and Heritage National Shark Recovery Group. Mr McLoughlin represented Australia on scientific issues at the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission and as Chair of their Working Party on Bycatch, and led Australia's delegation to 2006 scientific meetings of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna. Kevin has carried out MSC certification for sustainable fisheries for the Fiji longline albacore fishery and has undertaken surveillance audits for the NZ tuna fishery.

Full CVs of the team members are available on request from IFC

**Annex 3**

**Determination of surveillance level**

A surveillance audit may be conducted as either an "on-site" or "offsite audit". This is determined by using criteria set out by the MSC:

| Criteria | Surveillance Score | *NZ Troll caught albacore and complete scores* |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Default Assessment Tree | | |
| Yes | 0 | 0 |
| No | 2 | |
| 2. Number of Conditions | | |
| Zero Conditions | 0 | |
| 1-5 Conditions | 1 | 1 |
| >5 Conditions | 2 | |
| 3. Principle Level Scores | | |
| ≥ 85 | 0 | |
| <85 | 2 | 2 |
| 4. Conditions on outcome PIs? | | |
| Yes | 2 | 2 |
| No | 0 | |
| Total | | 5 |

The score for the fishery is used to determine the surveillance level appropriate to the fishery using the table below:

| | | | Years after certification or re-certification | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Surveillance score** | **Surveillance level** | | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **Year 4** |
| 2 or more | Normal surveillance | | On-site surveillance audit | On-site surveillance audit | On-site surveillance audit | On-site surveillance audit & recertification visit |
| 1 | Remote surveillance | Option 1 | Off-site surveillance audit | On-site surveillance audit | Off-site surveillance audit | On-site surveillance audit & recertification visit |
| | | Option 2 | On-site surveillance audit | Off-site surveillance audit | On-site surveillance audit | |
| 0 | Reduced surveillance | | Review new information | On-site surveillance audit | Review new information | On-site surveillance audit & recertification visit |

The NZ albacore troll caught fishery scores 5, because 2 Conditions remain open, one of the conditions is an outcome P1, and the Principle 1 score is <85, and so will require an on-site audit next year