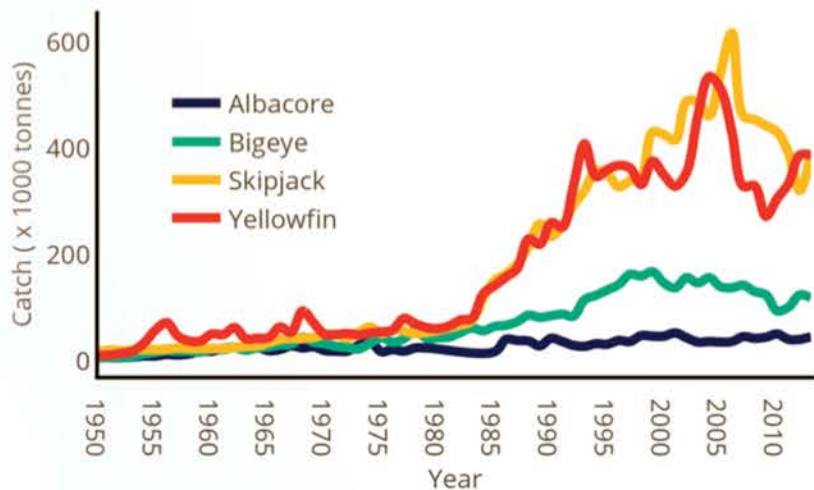


Indian Ocean tuna

Over 20% of the world’s tuna comes from the Indian Ocean (IO), making this the second largest region for tuna fishing on the planet. There are four key commercial tuna species in the IO, their stocks are overseen and monitored by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC).

Indian Ocean tuna catches by species (1950-2013)

Indian Ocean catch totals have been in decline since 2005, when a record 1.2 million tonnes were caught. Averaged catches from 2009-2013 shows that skipjack accounted for 45% of the catches in weight, followed by yellowfin (38%), bigeye (12%), and albacore (4%).



Quickfacts

974,300t

the total weight of skipjack, yellowfin, bigeye and albacore caught in the IO in 2013.

Fresh tuna:

mainly caught using pole & line and longline to keep it blemish-free for buyers demanding high-quality product.

Future tuna

Maldives skipjack and yellowfin pole and line fisheries are the first MSC-certified tuna fisheries in the Indian Ocean region

Skipjack. **LC**

Fast-growing and with attractive “white meat”, over 90% of IO skipjack is destined for canning.

Max. length & weight:
110cm/35kg.

Top 3 fleets (2013):
Maldives, Sri Lanka, & Spain.

Albacore. **NT**

One of the smaller commercial species, albacore has a mild flavour and firm texture, making it popular for canning.

Max. length & weight:
128cm/35kg.

Top 3 fleets (2013):
Taiwan, Indonesia, Japan.

Bigeye. **V**

Small bigeye are often used for canning, while larger/mature fish have grown in popularity for raw dishes due to soaring southern bluefin prices.

Max. length & weight:
200cm/210kg.

Top 3 fleets (2013):
Indonesia, Taiwan, Spain.

Yellowfin. **NT**

Small yellowfin are generally canned, while larger/mature fish are often shipped fresh and consumed in raw dishes.

Max. length & weight:
240cm/200kg.

Top 3 fleets (2013):
Spain, Maldives, France.

IUCN Red List of threatened species categories:

LC

Least concern

NT

Near threatened

V

vulnerable

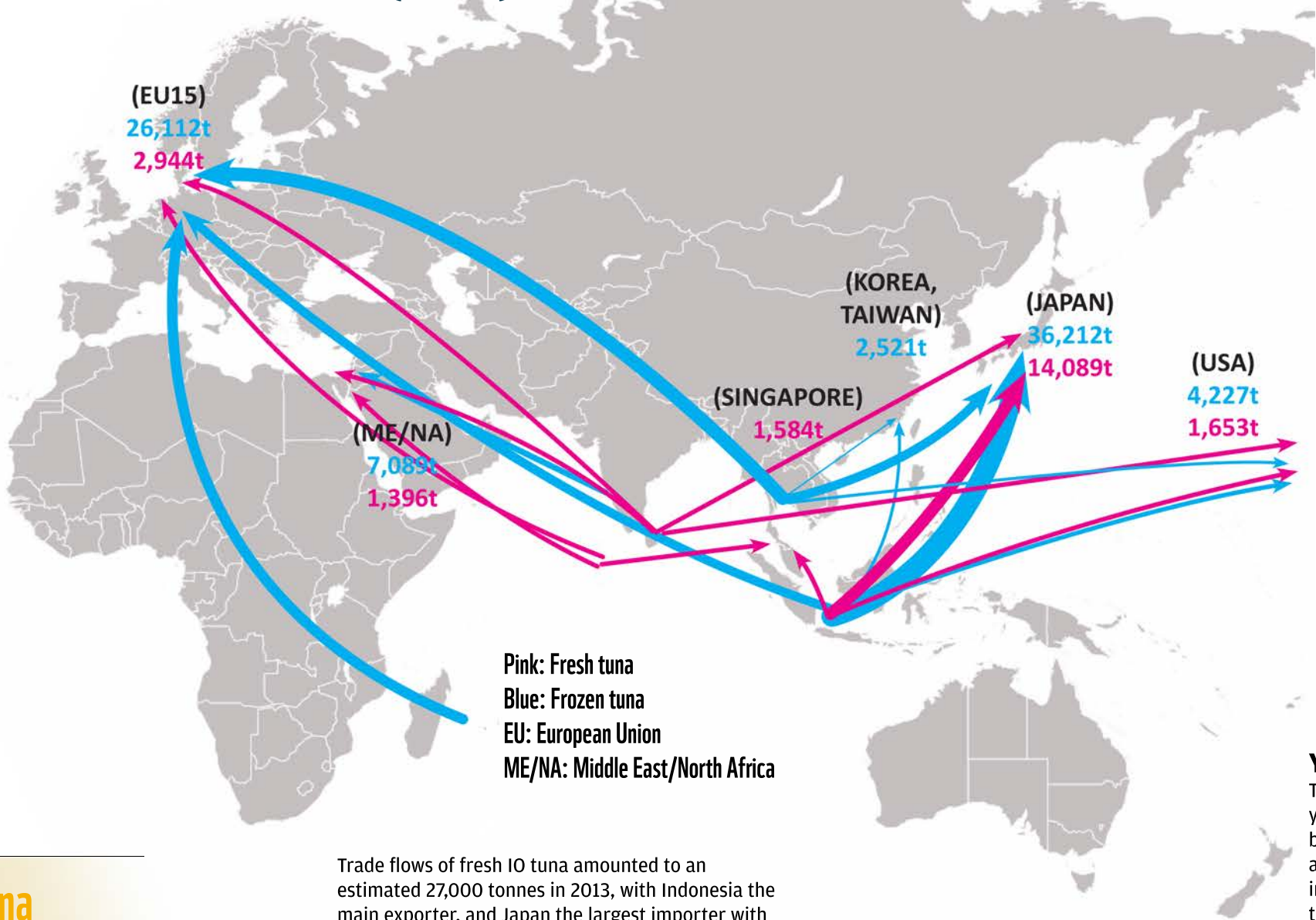
E

Endangered

CE

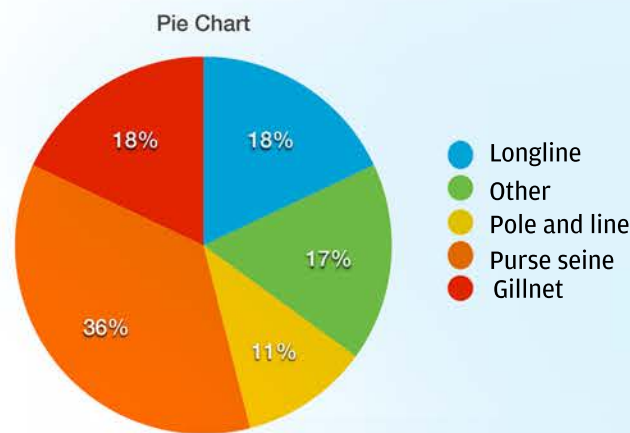
Critically endangered

Fresh and frozen Indian Ocean tuna markets (2013)



Trade flows of fresh IO tuna amounted to an estimated 27,000 tonnes in 2013, with Indonesia the main exporter, and Japan the largest importer with 54% of total tuna imports. Frozen tuna trade flows amounted to an estimated 155,000 tonnes in 2013, of which the EU imported 26,976 tonnes.

Indian Ocean tuna catches by gear (2009-2013)



Fishing in the IO: There are three types of fishing fleet with distinct fishing methods catching tuna in the IO:

- Industrial scale fleets: purse seining, longline, and gillnetting
- Semi-industrial fleets: purse seining, longline, gillnetting, may also combine with trolling
- Artisanal fleets: using line methods and gillnetting

Sustainability challenges facing IO tuna:

- Most vessels are required to have independent observers on board, but very few meet this requirement (close to zero for vessels supplying fresh/frozen). This means nobody can be certain that fishermen are following the rules.
- Most countries don't provide the required information on how many fish they are catching, which makes it very difficult for scientists to work out how many fish are left.
- Many of the requirements for countries who wish to fish in the Indian Ocean are not followed, and there are no penalties for those who don't.
- Many developing countries in the region simply lack the resources or expertise to meet these requirements.

Your part in tuna sustainability:

Tuna are one of the most overfished species on earth, but you can help the global effort to make them sustainable by refusing to buy tuna threatened from overfishing, and avoiding species harvested using methods that negatively impact other species and ecosystems. If buying, look for the Marine Stewardship Council's (MSC) distinctive blue label to ensure the fish has been caught using certified, sustainable practices.



Infographic produced by WWF's Smart Fishing Initiative (SFI), April 2015.

For more information:

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